History of the Know Nothing Party

IN

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History is past Politics and Politics are present History.—*Freeman*

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IN

Maryland

BY

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PREFACE.

This study of the Know Nothing party in Maryland was undertaken at the suggestion of Dr. B. C. Steiner, of the Johns Hopkins University. The success of the Know Nothing party in Maryland has never been really understood. Partisan bias and personal feeling have too often obscured the essential elements in the progress of the party. Removed as we are forty years from the heated politics of the time, it is possible to give that calm consideration which the subject requires. At the same time the interval is not too great to preclude the possibility of interviews with men who were contemporary with the events narrated.

The work has involved searching the files of many faded and dusty newspapers. These have been the principal sources of information. The numerous pamphlets quoted have also greatly supplemented the information given by the newspapers. Use has also been made of other incidental authorities which the footnotes show in all important cases. By no means the least enjoyable part of the work has been the numerous interviews with "survivors" of the period. The uniform courtesy shown, and the willingness to help an historical student have been extremely gratifying.

For valuable suggestions or information, the writer desires to express his thanks to Professor H. B. Adams and to Drs. Vincent, Steiner, Hollander and Ballagh, of the Johns Hopkins University; also to others who have assisted the writer by personal reminiscences of their experiences of this turbulent time in American politics.

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History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland.

I. INTRODUCTION.

When Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States in 1832, he was struck by the great freedom of the people in forming associations of all kinds, and especially upon the liberty with which political associations were formed. Commenting upon this he said: "It cannot be denied that the unrestrained liberty of association for political purposes is a privilege which a people is longest in learning how to exercise. If it does not throw the nation into anarchy, it perpetually augments the chances of that calamity. On one point, however, this perilous liberty offers a security against dangers of another kind; in countries where associations are free, secret societies are unknown. In America there are numerous factions, but no conspirators."[1]

What would have been the surprise of De Tocqueville if he had visited the United States two decades later and seen a secret oath-bound organization sweeping all before it in a triumphal march through the United States. Such an organization was the "Know Nothing" or American party.[2]

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[1] De Tocqueville: "Democracy in America," I, 236.

[2] After the secret machinery was discarded, the party called itself the "American" party. However, it was always popularly known as the "Know Nothing" party, and will always be referred to as such in this monograph. The official name of the order and of the party was always the American party, and not the "Supreme Order of the Star Spangled Banner," as stated by Mr. James Ford Rhodes in his history. Mr. Rhodes has taken his description from Hamble-

Obscure in its origin, its growth and membership known only to its officers, it first made its strength felt by its successes in local elections, where in many cases persons who had not been candidates were elected to office, or in other cases the members of the party split the old tickets and voted for the candidate favorable to their views. A unique phenomenon, indeed, in American politics was this new organization. With all its proceedings shrouded in secrecy, it managed to exist for several years before any accounts of it, except the vaguest generalities, found their way into the newspapers. The call for a meeting was never published, and the members were merely notified by bits of white paper stuck on fences and lamp-posts and scattered over the streets. In the early stage there was no public propaganda of its beliefs, and its membership was recruited and extended merely through personal solicitation. A member of the order would feel his way cautiously in conversation with a friend, and if he found him favorably disposed, would undertake to conduct him into the august presence of "Sam," this being the name by which the order was popularly known. This name was acquired from the fact that one member on meeting another would ask as a pass-word: "Have you seen Sam?" The answer would show whether the person questioned was a member of the order. All over the country extended the secret party, the organization rising from the local Council in the ward or county, through the Superior Council of the large cities, the State Councils, and culminating in the National Council.

To the inquirer who asked of the member who had attended a meeting, where he had been, the answer was invariably, "I don't know," and the same answer was given to all inquiries concerning the object and purposes

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ton's "History of the Campaign in Virginia in 1855," a contemporary work, very bitterly opposed to the Know Nothings. I have been assured by the recording secretary of the National Council and several of the surviving members of the party, that it never had any other name officially than the American party.

of the order. It was thus that the party got its popular sobriquet of "Know Nothing." A system of pass-words, grips and countersigns made known the members to one another and prevented the inquisitive from penetrating into the secrets of the order. An elaborate ritual completed the machinery, and the candidate for the honor of being enrolled in the ranks of the party had to pass through a series of questions, and when the ceremony was complete he was finally charged with the objects and purposes of the order.

The object of this new secret party was to oppose the progress of the Roman Catholic Church, and to secure a longer term of residence for foreign immigrants before giving them the privilege of naturalization. The great watchword was, "Put none but Americans on guard tonight," a saying attributed to Washington. Washington's farewell address was also held up as justifying the movement, and especially that portion where Washington said: "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, my fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake. It is one of the most baneful woes of a republican government." After the party came into the open its purposes were stated by the Know Nothing Almanac of 1855[1] to be "Anti-Romanism, Anti-Bedinism, Anti-Pope's Toeism, Anti-Nunneryism, Anti-Winking Virginism, Anti-Jesuitism, and Anti-the-Whole-Sacerdotal-Hierarchism with all its humbugging mummeries. Know Nothingism is for light, liberty, education and absolute freedom of conscience, with a strong dash of devotion to one's native soil."

It seemed strange that a party bound to secrecy and opposed to the Catholics, as it was, should lay claim to "light" and "liberty of conscience" as its tenets. To the charge of secrecy they would answer that in all political movements secrecy is the element of success. The old parties were charged with having their secret agents at

[1] Tisdale's "Know Nothing Almanac," 1855, 7.

Washington, and conventions were said to be run by secret committees.[1] Furthermore it was said that it was fighting with Jesuits and priest, an enemy sworn to secrecy, and it declared that "When you fight the devil, you have a right to fight him with fire."[2]

As to the question of liberty of conscience, the Know Nothings denied that they were intolerant towards the Catholic religion. The leading Know Nothing speakers were eager to deny any proscription, either of Catholics or foreigners. Not on account of their religious belief did they oppose the Catholics, but on account of their political activity. But while they denied that they warred upon the Catholics, because they were Catholics; yet with a casuistical ingenuity and sophistry worthy of their Jesuit opponents, they declared that a Catholic could not be a good American citizen.

The party, it seems, had been put into operation in the State of New York in the early part of 1852. A gentleman in that State had worked out the plan as early as 1849.[3] It rapidly extended its influence, but quietly withal, and not until 1854 did it play any important part in the elections. Old Whigs, dissatisfied Democrats, and the mass of the discontented, who are always looking for some universal panacea eagerly went into the new party. Its very secrecy and the mystic charm of clandestine meetings also exerted a great influence in attracting men into its organization. With this sketch of its general principles we can enter into a consideration of the progress of the party in Maryland.

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[1] "Principles and Objects of the American Party," 22.

[2] Speech of W. R. Smith, of Alabama, in House of Representatives, January 12, 1855. *Cong. Globe*, 33d Congress, 2d Session; Appendix, 97.

[3] Whitney: "Defense of the American Policy," 280.

II. GROWTH OF THE PARTY IN MARYLAND.

In the latter part of the year 1852, probably in the month of October, this secret order first made its appearance in Baltimore.[1] At this time thirteen persons, symbolic of the thirteen original States, met and were initiated into the mysteries of the order by a duly commissioned delegate from the Council in New York State. In a short space of time the order spread rapidly, and subordinate Councils were established all over the city and in the counties. Five delegates from the subordinate Councils constituted the Superior Council of the city, and this Superior Council together with the lodges in the counties elected delegates to the Grand Council. Within three months from the time the order started, a grand lodge had been established.

The rapid growth of the order was not at all surprising. At various times before there had been ebullitions of a native sentiment, but they had subsided almost before they had time to crystallize into a formidable political organization. Some years before this time, in the forties, a party known as the American Republican party, and having opposition to foreigners as its basis, had made its appearance in the United States. In 1844 this party made its appearance in Baltimore, and received the support of the *Clipper*,[2] the newspaper which was afterwards the great advocate of the Know Nothing party. On March 12, 1845, this party held a convention,[3] and in the election of that

[1] Whitney, in the "Defense of the American Policy," 284, states that the first Council was instituted in May, 1853. This, however, is probably a mistake, as the recording secretary of the National Council, and two members who were present at this first meeting, state positively that it was held in the fall of 1852.

[2] *Clipper*, November 5, 1844. [3] *Ibid.*, March, 13, 1845.

NOTE—The references to newspapers are to Baltimore papers, except where otherwise stated.

G. Bl...

year put candidates for local offices into the field. The time, however, was not yet ripe for such a movement to make an impression in American politics. The old parties were too strong and active for this newcomer to force itself into the field. The anti-foreign sentiment alone was not enough, and this early movement lacked the opposition to the Catholics which was characteristic of its more fortunate successor. At the election in 1845 it polled about thirty-three hundred votes,[1] and then quietly sank into oblivion.

The sentiment against the immigrant again came to the surface in the Constitutional Convention of 1850. Here a motion was introduced looking to some provision "restricting from future foreign immigrants to the State of Maryland, the right of suffrage, until they shall have been residents of said State for at least ten years after they shall have given notice to the proper authorities of their intention to become citizens of the United States."[2] Again, at the municipal election of 1852, the spread of the native sentiment made itself felt. France, the Whig candidate, was charged with having signed a memorial to Congress in favor of the Native American movement. He denied the charge, and his denial apparently went against him in the election.[3]

Such had been the forerunners of this new secret political party. Such a sentiment being latent in the community, it was no wonder that the party attained an exceedingly rapid growth. The progress of the order was manifested by the growth of public opinion in favor of its principles. These had acquired so great a circulation that on March 15, 1853, a new order, known as the United Sons of America, was instituted in Baltimore.[4] This order had practically the same principles and was composed to a large extent of the same men, but it was distinct from the Know Nothing order. At the same time it worked hand and

[1] *Clipper*, October 2, 1845. [2] "Proceedings Convention," 1850, 94.
[3] *American*, October, 15, 1852. [4] *Clipper*, March 15, 1853.

glove with the secret order in agitating the principles common to the two, while the secret order held the political machinery.

For some months after the institution of this new order the party is apparently quiescent. It was so quiet that by July the *Baltimore American* thought it time to preach its funeral sermon, saying that "its structure was never more formidable than a jack-o'-lantern * * * and in time the folks found out that the ghost was composed of a flimsy sheet topped by an illuminated pumpkin."[1] Yet scarcely a month had passed when the movement again bobbed up, and this time with a mass-meeting in Monument Square. On August 18 the first mass-meeting was held in the above-mentioned locality, and was attended by a great number of people. This meeting was held under the auspices of the United Sons of America,[2] and the Know Nothing order was merely a passive participant. About the same time we find notices in newspapers of the growth of the party in other sections of the State.[3]

In the meantime another new organization had come into the field, and gave the first occasion for an exhibition of the strength of the Know Nothings. This was the movement in favor of a "Maine Law Temperance" ticket, which finally crystallized in the nomination of candidates for the House of Delegates and for Sheriff of Baltimore.[4] The Maine Law ticket for the Legislature was composed of five Whigs and five Democrats.

In the previous session of the Legislature a bill, known as the "Kerney School Bill," had been introduced, having for its object the allotment of a certain portion of the school fund to private or sectarian schools.[5] The object of this bill was to enable the Catholic schools to share in the

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[1] *American*, July 9, 1853.
[2] *Sun*, *American*, *Clipper*, August 19, 1853.
[3] *Sun*, August 23, 27, 31, September 15; *Clipper*, August 27, 1853.
[4] *Sun*, September 30; *American*, August 15.
[5] *House Journal*, 1852, 606, 768; 1853, 330, 551, 563, 577.

school fund, and accordingly the Know Nothing party threw its weight against those candidates who were favorable to the bill. The United Sons of America addressed a circular-letter to the candidates, asking them whether they favored the bill, and also whether they were in "favor of exempting the members of any religious sect from payment of their quota of the school tax."[1]

The Democratic candidates to a man refused to consider the questions, while the Temperance candidates announced their opposition to the Kerney Bill and were accordingly endorsed by the Sons of America, which was practically the Know Nothing party at this time.[2] The result was seen in the election, when the Democratic candidate for Governor received a majority in the city of more than three thousand over his Whig opponent, while the Democratic Legislative ticket was defeated by a little less than a thousand. The Know Nothing party did not enter into the question in the rest of the State and straight-out Whigs and Democrats were elected from the counties. The House of Delegates, being about equally divided between the two parties, the ten Delegates from Baltimore City held the balance of power.[3]

A little later the Anti-Catholic sentiment was increased by the presence in Baltimore of Bedini, the Papal legate. In the early part of 1854 he made his appearance in Baltimore, and was the occasion of much excitement. On the sixteenth of January, a crowd of men and boys proceeded to Monument Square and burned him in effigy.[4] The opposition to Bedini was claimed to be due, not as much to his being a Catholic as to his cruelty while Governor of Bologna, and his opposition to the national movement in Italy.[5] However much may be ascribed to this cause, there is no doubt that sentiment was aroused against him because he had come to adjudicate between an American

[1] *Sun*, October 8, 1853.
[2] *Sun, American*, November 1, 2.
[3] *Sun*, November 5.
[4] *Sun, American*, January 17, 1854.
[5] *Sun*, January 18, 1854.

congregation and the Catholic clergy. He was looked upon as the intruding representative of a foreign power beyond the sea.

In the meantime the order was spreading all over the State and lodges were reported as organizing in the various counties.[1] The first development of their power was in Western Maryland, in the city of Hagerstown. Here, at the municipal election on April 10, a sensation was created by the election of the Anti-Maine Law candidate for Mayor and the Know Nothing candidates for the Council.[2]

This surprise was followed by a greater one about a month later in the city of Cumberland. Here the Whigs and Democrats had both made nominations for Mayor and city officers. The result was that some candidates of both parties had been elected. The Know Nothings had selected a ticket from those nominated by the two old parties and had triumphantly elected every man on it.[3] The strength of the order was thus manifested even to the most skeptical, and it looked as if the defunct Whig party and a divided Democracy were alike to be swallowed up in this new force which was showing so much strength.[4]

In Baltimore also the order was constantly gaining in numbers and influence. The Washington election of June 5 was the first open manifestation of sympathy toward the new party in Baltimore since the election in the previous year. The canvass in Washington had been especially spirited, and much interest was manifested in Baltimore as to the outcome. Crowds gathered around the newspaper offices awaiting the results, and when the success of the Know Nothing candidate was announced the cheering indicated that there were many sympathizers among the waiting crowd.[5] About the same time there is a notice of a new weekly paper, to be called the *Spirit of '76*, whose

[1] *Sun*, May 13, July 3, 8, 28, August 12; *Easton Star*, April 18.
[2] *Sun*, April 12, 1854.
[3] *Sun*, May 10, 1854.
[4] *Ibid.* *Easton Star*, May 16, 1854.
[5] *Sun*, *American*, June 6, 1854.

great aim was "to place the government of America in the hands of true Americans."[1]

Meanwhile the Democrats had not been inactive. Their City Convention had met on July 20, and had denounced the Know Nothing party as "contrary to the principles of the Constitution."[2] As yet the Know Nothings had made no move, but their strength was evidently feared, as the Democratic meeting on September 12 declared that they could carry the election "in spite of the combination of Whigs, Know Nothings and Temperance men."[3] Not until about two weeks before the election, which was to occur on October 11 did the Know Nothings put a candidate in the field. On September 27 the *Clipper* put the name of Samuel Hinks at the head of its editorial column, and stated that it was authorized to announce him as the American candidate for Mayor. On the night before a secret convention had been held, composed of five delegates from each ward, and the candidate had been selected.[4] Unannounced to the public, unknown to the press, with no published account of the proceedings, no one possessing any information concerning it, except the delegates, this new party, which was to save the democratic institutions of America, met in a secret convention and put forth its candidate.

The campaign was a short and lively one. The Democrats were absolutely at sea in regard to the number of their opponents. In order to watch the election they had recourse to a trick which was adopted and put to serviceable use by the Know Nothings. When the tickets were printed, three blue stripes were printed down the back, so that the observer could easily see how a person voted. But before the election the Know Nothings had learned of this trick, and they accordingly had their tickets printed with a like stripe. Not until the middle of the day of

[1] *American*, June 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 22.
[3] *Sun*, *American*, September 13.
[4] *Sun*, *American*, September 27.

election did the Democrats discover the trick, but it was too late to rectify it. The Know Nothings elected their candidate by over two thousand majority, and also a majority in both branches of the City Council.[1] The election was as fair as elections were in those days, the methods employed not being peculiar to any party. At one of the lower wards the Empire Club attempted to run things in the interest of the Democrats, and the Know Nothings from up-town sent a deputation to resist them. The opposing forces met at Fayette and Exeter Streets, and for some time a lively contest was waged with pistols, clubs and stones.[2] When it became evident that the Know Nothing candidates had been elected the victors paraded the streets with fireworks and cannon. At several points the procession was attacked by its opponents.[3]

Hardly had the party come into power in Baltimore when there was friction between the Mayor and City Council over the appointments.[4] The Councilmen claimed that they were not consulted in the selection of city officials; that former political divisions were not sufficiently regarded;[5] and that some of the nominees were not members of the order.[6] The Councilmen, however, contented themselves with rejecting some of the nominations of the Mayor and did not attempt to take the appointing power away from the Mayor, as they did in a recent case of this kind. The majority of the party were in favor of the Mayor[7] and the Councilmen had to give way.

During 1855 the party continued its successful course. Not only in Hagerstown[8] and Cumberland,[9] where they had been successful the year before, were they again victorious, but also Annapolis[10] and Williamsport[11] fell into

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[1] *Sun*, *American*, October 12, 1854. [2] *Sun*, *American*, October 12.
[3] *Sun*, *American*, October 12 and 13.
[4] *Cf.* "Mayor Hooper and the Republican Councilmen in 1896."
[5] *Sun*, January 1. [6] *Ibid.*, *American*, January 4 and 6.
[7] *American*, January 8. [8] *American*, April 12, 1855.
[9] *Sun*, May 17. [10] *Ibid.*, April 4. [11] *Ibid.*, March 9.

their hands. At Westminster, Carroll County, a meeting was called to form a party in opposition to the Know Nothings. A series of resolutions denouncing the Know Nothings were presented, but the meeting, amid much confusion, refused to adopt them, and finally adjourned with three cheers for "Sam."[1]

Nor was it in Maryland alone that the party was making such great progress. The year 1854 was an off year in Maryland politics, there being in that year only elections to local offices. Consequently there was no opportunity for it to show its power over the State at large. It was in the Northern States that the party achieved a phenomenal success which made all the old politicians open their eyes in wonderment. In Massachusetts no Governor had been elected by a majority of the people since the rise of the Free Soil party, but in this year the Know Nothings elected their candidate for Governor by a clear majority of thirty-three thousand.[2] Gardner, a played-out Whig, had been the Know Nothing candidate, and those, like Congdon, the editor of the *Boston Atlas*, who thought the movement a "huge joke,"[3] found out the day after the election that the joke was on the other side. In New York, although the party did not elect its candidate, it surprised its opponents by polling over a hundred and twenty-two thousand votes in the State election. Delaware was also carried by the Know Nothings. In the other States the success of the party was mainly confined to the local elections. The Congressional elections resulted in the return of seventy-five Know Nothing Congressmen.[4]

These successes, of course, revealed the strength of the party, and the year 1854 saw the end of the secret organization. After the National Convention of 1855 (which will

[1] *Sun*, April 6.

[2] Haynes: "Causes of Know Nothing Success in Massachusetts," in *American Historical Review* for October, 1897, 81.

[3] Congdon: "Reminiscences of a Journalist," 145.

[4] "*Tribune* Almanac, 1855."

be considered in the next paragraph), the party gave up the "humbugging mummeries" of ritual, grips and passwords and adopted the current political methods. The convention, having determined that all the proceedings of the party should be free and unconcealed, the secret machinery was given up, primaries and nominating conventions were held and the party became worthy of more respect as it came out into the open.

The National Council met at Philadelphia on June 5. Almost every State in the Union was represented. This convention clearly showed that the secret machinery was played out, as the proceedings of the convention, while ostensibly secret, were being reported in the newspapers all over the country. This resulted in the convention abolishing all the secret machinery, and the principles of the order were thenceforth to be openly avowed and discussed. A platform was put forth, the first public authoritative statement of the principles of the party, which may be summarized as follows:

1. Acknowledgment of a Supreme Being.
2. Cultivation of an intense American feeling.
3. Maintenance of the Union.
4. Obedience to the Constitution.
5. Revision of the immigration laws.
6. Essential modification of the naturalization laws.
7. Hostility to corrupt political practices and "the wild hunt after office."
8. Resistance to the "aggressive policy and the corrupting tendencies of the Roman Catholic Church."
9. Reformaton of the character of the National Legislature.
10. Restriction of executive patronage.
11. Education in the public schools, and the use of the Bible therein.
12. Existing laws on slavery to be maintained, and at the same time denying the power of Congress to legislate upon the slavery question.

13. Non-intervention in the internal affairs of foreign nations.

14. All principles of the order to be openly avowed.[1]

This platform was not adopted without a struggle. The Northern members, led by Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, fought hard and earnestly for the adoption of an anti-slavery plank. This, however, was rejected, and the delegates from twelve States seceded and issued an appeal to the people for the re-enactment of the Missouri Compromise. The twelfth section on slavery was indeed a peculiar one. It begins by holding the old Whig and Democratic parties responsible for the systematic agitation of the slavery question, and counsels submission to the laws on the subject as a "final and conclusive settlement." But deeming it the highest duty "to avow their opinions on a subject so important" the platform went on to deny that Congress had any power to legislate upon the subject, and that Congress "ought not to legislate upon the subject of slavery within the territory of the United States." While they deplored the agitation which was caused by Congressional legislation, yet they were willing to acquiesce, but at the same time they denied the authority of Congress to pass the laws which they were willing to approve. While a straddle was intended, yet it was on the whole more favorable to the South, as the power of Congress to legislate on the slavery question in the territories was denied.

The meeting of the National Council revived interest in the party, and on June 20, an immense mass-meeting in Monument Square, Baltimore, ratified the action of the Philadelphia Convention.[2] Numerous ratification meetings were also held throughout the State.[3] On July 18 the first State Convention, and also the first open convention, met in Baltimore. The above platform of the Philadelphia Convention was adopted and endorsed *in toto*. The

[1] For the complete platform, see Appendix A.

[2] *Sun*, *American*, June 21.

[3] *Sun*, June 30, July 7, 9, 11, 19. *American*, July 19.

convention also nominated candidates for State offices.[1] These nominations were W. H. Purnell for Comptroller, and D. J. McPhail for Lottery Commissioner. Purnell had been a Whig and McPhail a Democrat.[2]

It was over the eighth section of this platform that the controversy in Maryland was most pronounced. Some of the lodges had even given up the Catholic test for admission, and it was reported that an effort would be made in the State Convention to repudiate the religious reference in the Philadelphia platform.[3] By many it was thought best not to have such an unequivocal denunciation of the Catholics as was contained in the article against "aggressive policy and corrupting tendencies of the Roman Catholic Church." An effort was made to substitute in place of this clause "that no person should be selected for political station (whether of native or foreign birth) who recognizes any allegiance or obligation of any description to any foreign prince, potentate or power, or who refuses to recognize the Federal and State Constitutions (each within its sphere) as paramount to all other laws as issues of political action." Maryland, it must be remembered, had produced such Catholics as Charles Carroll of Carrollton and Roger Brooke Taney.

The agitation against the Catholics had brought forth an explicit denial by the Archbishop and Bishops of the province of Baltimore of any allegiance other than spiritual to the Pope. In a pastoral letter the above-named Church authorities in May, 1855, had said: "Respect and obey the constituted authorities, for all power is from God, and they that resist, resist the ordinance of God, and purchase for themselves damnation. To the general and State governments you owe allegiance in all that regards the civil order; the authorities of the Church challenge your obedience in the things of salvation. We have no need of pressing this

[1] *Sun, American, Clipper*, July 19.
[2] *American*, July 19. [3] *American*, July 13.

distinction, which you fully understand and constantly observe. You know that we have uniformly taught you both publicly and privately to perform all the duties of good citizens, and that we have never exacted of you, as we ourselves have never made, even to the highest ecclesiastical authority, any engagements inconsistent with the duties we owe to the country and its laws. On every occasion we have avowed these principles, and even in our communications to the late Pontiff, we rejected as a calumny the imputation that we were in civil matters subject to his authority."[1] The party, however, in its zeal for Protestantism, was not ready at this time to adopt the milder plank, which every true American could endorse, and which did not savor of the bigotry and intolerance of the more radical pronunciamento.

The candidates of the Know Nothing party denied any intolerance. They claimed, and with justice, that the Catholics had thrown themselves into the arms of one great political party,[2] that they had endeavored to change the Public School System,[3] and that the trustees of the Church of St. Louis at Buffalo had been excommunicated for their refusal to violate the laws of the State in obedience to the rule of the Church.[4] These facts will be considered at greater length when the causes of the success of the party are considered. At present we shall merely consider the progress of the party.

The nominations of the American party set the ball rolling. About a month later, on August 16, 1855, the Democratic State Convention met and put its candidates in the field. As was to be expected it denounced the Know Nothing party as contrary to the Constitution, and declared that "its precepts, its organization, its principles and objects are unconstitutional, anti-republican, dangerous to

[1] "Review of H. W. Davis," 8. "Pastoral Letter," 15 and 16.

[2] Address of the American Candidates to the people of Baltimore. *Sun*, November 3.

[3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*

free institutions, and destitute of sound morals and true religion."[1] Within a short time, local and legislative tickets had been put forth in almost all the counties of the State by both the Know Nothings and their opponents. In some of the counties, the Democrats and Whigs united and ran a fusion ticket against the new party. This was the case in Montgomery,[2] Anne Arundel,[3] Howard,[4] Kent, Queen Anne, Caroline,[5] Dorchester,[6] Somerset and Worcester.[7] The Legislative[8] and City Conventions[9] met in Baltimore and completed the Know Nothing nominations. The Maine Law Temperance Convention also met on September 27, and a motion was made to endorse the Know Nothings. The motion, however, was withdrawn, and it was determined that it was inexpedient to make nominations.[10]

The campaign was a brisk and merry one. The cry of the Know Nothing party was "to bring the Constitution back to the model it had in the days of the fathers," much as in recent campaign we have heard the cry of "the money of the Constitution." The venal influence of the foreign immigrant and the corrupting policy of the Catholic Church were the two great themes of its discourses. The most indecent stories were circulated of the immoralities of the confessional and the licentiousness of the priests.[11] The so-called "Confessions of a French Priest" were held up as high proof of the immorality in the convents and nunneries.[12] All the evils of the Church and the crimes of the Popes in the Middle Ages were again published,[13] and it was denied that Popery had changed its character since the

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[1] "Proceedings Convention;" *Sun*, *American*, August 17.
[2] *Sun*, August 11. [3] *Sun*, August 28; *American*, August 29.
[4] *Sun*, September 4. [5] *Easton Star*, September 4.
[6] *American*, September 14. [7] *Easton Star*, September 4.
[8] September 6. [9] September 12-21.
[10] *Sun*, *American*, September 28.
[11] "Priests' Prisons for Women," 28. [12] *Ibid.*, 24.
[13] *Clipper*, February 14, 1855.

Middle Ages.[1] The Pope was held up as aiming to become supreme head of the world, and such authors as Bellarmine, Augustinus Triumphus, Avorus, Pelagius, Panormitamus, Hostiensis, Sylvester and Thomas Aquinas were appealed to in order to prove the indictment.[2] Seldom had so much scholasticism been quoted in the exciting arena of American politics. Even the style of architecture of the churches was appealed to. It was said "they are built of solid masonry, gothic style of architecture, and easily convertible into forts; and any one who has been in a country where he has seen them used for forts can readily imagine why they are so strongly built in this country."[3]

Nor were the opponents of the Know Nothings at all sparing in the use of epithets. The party was characterized as a secret oath-bound, dark-lantern organization, meeting in the dead of night to concoct schemes and hoodwink their opponents. Then again it was charged with being descended from the Hartford Convention and its leaders were denounced as traitors.[4] The Know Nothings were denounced as Abolitionists in disguise, on account of the abolition tendencies of the Northern branch of the party, where indeed the cry of the order had by this time been changed from an Anti-Pope to Anti-Nebraska.[5] The climax of these characterizations was reached by a Democratic leader in Western Maryland, who is reported to have said that "St. Paul was a Democrat and all the Jews were Know Nothings."[6]

A special point of attack was Henry Winter Davis, who was running for Congress in the Fourth District. His in-

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[1] "Popery as it was in the Middle Ages, and as it is in the Nineteenth Century," 25.

[2] "Sons of the Sires," 201.

[3] "Reasons for Abandoning the Old Whig and Democratic Parties," 12.

[4] *American*, November 5, 1855.

[5] See Haynes in *American Historical Review*, for October, 1897, 79-80.

[6] Wm. T. Hamilton. *Clipper*, November 2, 1855.

consistencies and change of front did not fail to be availed of by his opponents. Davis had been a Whig, but when the new party came into the field he went into it, and his great ability and magnetic power soon made him one of its leaders. In 1852 he had been presidential elector on the Whig ticket, yet only three years later, in 1855, he said of the presidential canvass, in which he had taken so active a part: "In 1852 the rumps of two broken-down and discredited factions usurped the name of national parties, entered the field under the old platforms and waged a scandalous contest of bribery and fraud, which ended in the election of President Pierce."[1] In 1852 he had also published the "War of Ormudz and Ahriman in the Nineteenth Century," containing an account of the fight of freedom against despotism. In this work he eulogized the foreign-born citizen and delighted to do him honor,[2] and he was the pronounced advocate of Kossuth and the policy of American intervention in the affairs of Europe.[3] Yet in 1855 he was opposed to the election of foreigners[4] and he favored as little connection with foreign nations as possible.[5] In his earlier work he had stated that "the forms of democratic government admit of no concealment * * * the quarrels are as open as the unity, the peace, and the love,"[6] yet in 1853 he became the member of this new secret organization in Baltimore. It was said that copies of this book could not be bought in 1855, although they were plentiful before Davis was nominated for Congress.[7]

Nor were the incidents of the campaign confined to a mere bandying of words. There was great political excitement, and fights and personal encounters were quite frequent.[8] The Know Nothings while marching to their

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[1] "Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," 19.
[2] "Ormudz and Ahriman," 344-348. [3] *Ibid.*, 367, 393, 428.
[4] "Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," 26.
[5] *Ibid.*, 46.
[6] "Ormudz and Ahriman," 352. [7] "Review of H. W. Davis," 11.
[8] *American*, October 6.

convention had a brick thrown at them while passing the Lexington Market and a riot almost resulted.[1] Sometime later a shot was fired from a Democratic parade into the office of the *Clipper*, the leading Know Nothing paper.[2] In other parts of the State also much bitterness was manifested, and at Ellicott City, after the adjournment of a Know Nothing mass-meeting, the Know Nothings proceeded to the Union meeting, and set up such a shouting that it was impossible for the meeting to proceed.[3] The day before the election the report was circulated that the government at Washington had sent five hundred horse-pistols to the Democratic party.[4] Davis himself reported this at a mass-meeting, and having one of them handed up to him, he declared that it had the government mark upon it.[5]

The election passed off much like that of the year before. There was considerable fighting and rioting at various points between the Democratic and the Know Nothing clubs, and the jubilation of the victors was kept up far into the night and even into the next day. Indeed, the rioting on the day after the election was probably greater than on the election day itself. At one point a Know Nothing procession was fired upon from the second story of a building. The building was stormed and its occupants were glad enough to escape.[6]

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[1] *Sun, American*, September 22. [2] *Ibid.*, October 27, 30.

[3] *Sun*, November 6, 1855. This was a favorite trick of the Know Nothings all over the country. George N. Julian thus describes this action in Indiana: "If a meeting was called to expose and denounce its schemes, it was drowned in the Know Nothing flood which at the appointed time, completely overwhelmed the helpless minority. This happened in my own county and town, where thousands of men including many of my old Free Soil brethren, assembled as an organized mob to suppress the freedom of speech, and succeeded by brute force in taking possession of every building in which their opponents could meet and silencing them by savage yells." "Political Recollections," 142. [4] *Sun*, November 7. [5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Sun, American*, November 9, 1855.

The success of the Know Nothings was complete. Baltimore City and thirteen out of twenty-one counties were ranged in the Know Nothing column. Most of the Whig counties became Know Nothing, but there were three Whig counties where the Know Nothings never obtained a foothold. These were St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's.[1] In Charles and St. Mary's especially did both Whigs and Democrats unite in opposition to them.[2] At the State Convention of the Know Nothing party in 1855 these two counties were not even represented. The reason for this was apparent. It was in St. Mary's County that the colony of Maryland had first been planted, and this and the adjoining county (Charles) had always had a large Catholic population. These counties were also adjacent to the Virginia line, and the defeat of the Know Nothings in that State in June, 1855, had also probably had its influence on the vote in this section.

Again in other sections of the country were the Know Nothings victorious. In Massachusetts they elected their candidate for Governor and in New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York and Kentucky the party was again successful.

On January 2, 1856, the new Legislature met at Annapolis. The Know Nothings had an overwhelming majority in the House of Delegates,[3] while in the Senate[4] they were only able to organize with the help of some of the holdover Whig Senators. In Massachusetts in the previous year the Know Nothing Legislature was marked by the great number of ministers elected to it, twenty-four clergymen being members, a number which has never been equaled since.[5] Although many clergymen had taken an active part in the Know Nothing movement in Maryland

[1] *Sun*, June 5, July 3 and 11, August 25; *American*, August 18 and 27.
[2] *Easton Star*, June 12.
[3] Know Nothing 54, Whig 1, Democrat 9, Union 10.
[4] Know Nothing 8, Whig 9, Democrat 3, Union 2.
[5] *New England Magazine*, March, 1897, 7.

(a Presbyterian minister in Baltimore being especially prominent in the agitation in the preceding campaign and exceedingly persistent in his endeavors to suppress convents and nunneries), the Constitution of Maryland forbid any minister of the gospel from holding a seat in the Legislature.[1] The House organized by electing Wm. H. Travers, of Baltimore, Speaker.[2] George Wells, a holdover Whig Senator from Anne Arundel County, was elected President of the Senate.[3]

Hardly had the Legislature organized when its equanimity was rudely disturbed by the message of the Governor. Governor Ligon, as a Democrat, was naturally much opposed to this new party which was sweeping all before it, and in his official communication to the General Assembly he took pains to score the Know Nothings upon their secret organization.[4] After reviewing the affairs of the State he considers that he would "fail to discharge a public duty" if he did not call attention to "the formation and encouragement of secret political societies." Continuing, he says: "But how much more are they to be deprecated, when those purposes tend to the subversion of the well and most dearly cherished principles of our Government, and to the establishment of rules for discriminating against large classes of citizens, not only unknown to the Federal Constitutions[5] and those of the several States, but plainly prohibited both by the letter and spirit of each and all of them. * * * If on the one hand we permit brute force to control the ballot-box and violence to deter the quiet and peaceably-disposed citizens from the exercise of his right of suffrage, or on the other hand to allow a citizen to be proscribed on account of his religious faith, we poison the very foundation of public security, our Con-

[1] Constitution 1850, Art. III, sec. 11.

[2] *House Journal*, 5. [3] *Senate Journal*, 4.

[4] Governor's Message, 28, 29.

[5] An ambiguity of which his opponents did not fail to take advantage.

stitution becomes a solemn mockery and the Republic a cheat and a delusion whose very essence is despotism."[1]

Mr. Kennedy, of Baltimore, at once offered a resolution that "so much of the Governor's message as related to secret political societies be referred to a select committee of five," which should inquire as to the existence, import and character of such secret societies, and also to ascertain the kind of secrets held by such societies.[2] The committee was also instructed to request the Governor to communicate to them any information which he might possess, and also have power to summon witnesses. A substitute to refer the entire message to a select committee of five with instructions to refer all subjects in it to the appropriate committee was adopted,[3] but on the following day a reconsideration was carried,[4] and finally, on January 10, the original resolution was adopted by the House.[5] The committee as appointed consisted of Messrs. Kennedy, Hall, Goldsborough, Merrick and Smith.[6]

It soon became evident that the investigation was proceeding along the line of most legislative investigations, and a conclusion reached favorable to the dominant party. On January 31, Mr. Merrick submitted an order that the clerk of the House be directed to issue a summons at the instance of any two members of the committee for such witnesses as they might designate.[7] This, however, the House refused to do by a strict party vote of twelve to forty-seven.[8]

It seems that on January 19, four days after the committee was appointed, and the committee not yet having been convened or organized, the minority addressed a note to the chairman of the committee, furnishing him with a list of persons who could give testimony relative to the

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[1] Governor's Message, 29.
[2] *House Journal*, 27.
[3] *House Journal*, 26.
[4] *Ibid.*, 29.
[5] *Ibid.*, 46.
[6] *Ibid.*, 59.
[7] *Ibid.*, 170.
[8] *Ibid.*, 171.

investigation.[1] No notice was taken of this note, except a mere acknowledgment at the first meeting of the committee, which was held on January 31.[2] At the meeting on February 8, the committee by a party vote of two to three refused to examine witnesses or send for the papers.[3] The committee thus refusing to examine witnesses the minority carried on an investigation of its own, and on March 3 the majority and minority both presented their reports to the House.[4]

The majority commented rather sarcastically upon the Governor's fear of secret political societies, stating that evidently the secrets which disquieted the Governor were the political doctrines avowed in the platform of the American party which had been published in a thousand newspapers,[5] and which were still undergoing republication. The committee, the report stated, found no use for its power to send for witnesses and papers and the House was already possessed of the most authentic information.[6] The report was partly a justification of the Know Nothing party and partly an attack upon the Governor. It concluded as follows: "To call it a breach of privilege, might perhaps describe it as the greater number of judicious and impartial citizens of the State would think most appropriate. To regret it as an unfortunate exhibition of ill-timed and undeserved discourtesy, is the milder, and on that account the preferable judgment of the committee upon an act of official intercourse which for many reasons touching the dignity and harmony of the State Government, it is to be hoped may never hereafter be used as a precedent."[7]

The minority, as was to be expected, took an opposite course, affirming the existence of the order,[8] which could hardly be contradicted, and denying any religious agitation before the Know Nothings came on the scene.[9] They also

[1] Minority Report, 6.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 9.
[4] *House Journal*, 622.
[5] Majority Report, 8.
[6] Majority Report, 9.
[7] *Ibid.*, 18.
[8] Minority Report, 13.
[9] *Ibid.*, 24.

gave what purported to be the ritual and pass-words of the order, together with the oaths and obligations.[1] They did not recommend any legislative action but left the subject to the "known patrotism, intelligence and reflection of the people of this State and the Union, whose sober second thought, past experience teaches, is not likely to fail in applying to all specious and spurious political agitations, or morbid political excitements, the best of all correctives—their censure and rebuke."[2]

The session had not progressed very far when it became evident that the majority of the members cared more for spoils than they did for the principles of the party. A great deal of agitation had been carried on in regard to convents, and numerous petitions were presented to the Legislature praying for the protection of persons confined in convents and nunneries.[3] A law which was presented proposed to give the Orphans' Court jurisdiction over the property of every inmate of such an institution, and provided that each inmate should appear in court twice a year and state whether she had any cause of complaint. Various other provisions for publicity were also inserted.[4] These petitions were all referred to a select committee, which consisted of three of the majority and two of the minority,[5] and on March 4 this committee brought in its report.[6]

To the surprise of all the report was unanimous. The committee did not feel called upon to inquire into the propriety of persons entering such establishments, and stated that the charge that persons are unlawfully confined was merely a general one, and no particular case had been cited. Even if such were the case, however, the committee thought the writ of *habeas corpus* offered ample protection to all citizens of the State, and if persons were unlaw-

[1] Minority Report, 14, *et seq.* [3] *Ibid.*, 44.
[3] *House Journal, passim.*
[4] A. B. Cross: "Young Women in Convents."
[5] *House Journal*, 298. [6] *Ibid.*, 641.

fully detained, it was not because the law did not afford ample protection, but because its benefits had not been availed of. In the opinion of the committee no further legislation was necessary.[1] On the last night of the session a member from Baltimore moved a substitute for the report of the committee. In the rush of the closing session, however, his motion was lost, and this was the end of the agitation.[2]

In the Senate some few petitions relative to the same subject were presented, but they were all laid on the table,[3] and not taken up for further consideration. The other pet doctrines of the party shared no better fate. Petitions to change the naturalization laws were referred to the Committee on Judiciary,[4] from which they never emerged, and a joint resolution offered in the House[5] to request the representatives in Congress to use their endeavors to modify the naturalization laws was never acted upon. On the last day of the session the author of the resolutions moved to call them up, but the House refused.[6] Petitions to equalize taxation by removing the exemptions of churches and literary institutions were likewise lost in the slough of legislative business.[7]

About the only thing of importance done by the Legislature was the election of a United States Senator to succeed Senator Pratt. Senator Pratt's term did not expire until March 4, 1857, and the Democratic members did not want to proceed to an election as there was no vacancy.[8] The Democrats proposed to postpone an election until there was a vacancy.[9] This would give the Governor a chance to appoint until the next meeting of the Legislature and there were hopes that the next Legislature would be Democratic. The Know Nothings, however, refused to

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[1] *House Journal*, 641.
[2] *American*, March 12, 1856.
[3] *Senate Journal*, 246, 336.
[4] *House Journal*, 298.
[5] *Ibid.*, 483.
[6] *Ibid.*, 846.
[7] *Senate Journal*, 91 ff.
[8] *Senate Journal*, 135.
[9] *Ibid.*

fall into the trap, and on February 14, Anthony Kennedy, a brother of John Pendleton Kennedy, was elected Senator.[1] The point was raised that he was ineligible as he was a member of the House which elected him, but on the last day of the session he resigned his seat.[2] It was rumored that the Governor would refuse him his commission on the above-named ground,[3] but on April 18, the commission was finally issued.

The success of the Know Nothing party in 1854 and 1855 brought it into undue prominence in national politics, and it was determined that a presidential ticket should be put in the field in the contest of 1856. In this year the Know Nothings were the first in the field. Their National Convention met at Philadelphia, on Washington's Birthday, and nominated ex-President Millard Fillmore, of New York, for President, and Andrew Jackson Donelson, of Tennessee, for Vice-President. While denouncing the slavery agitation yet they had nothing to offer to quell it. The party again straddled on the slavery question. Slavery itself was not mentioned except by implication. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise was condemned, but the convention at the same time refused to endorse the right of Congress to re-establish the Missouri Compromise line.[4] Slavery was not mentioned; but there was vague talk about the "cultivation of harmony and fraternal good-will * * * and to this end, non-interference by Congress with questions appertaining to the individual States and non-intervention by each State with the affairs of any other State."[5] It denounced the administration for "its vacillating course on the Kansas-Nebraska question," but gave no inkling as to what would be the proper course to pursue. An Indiana delegate, Sheets, stated the contents of the platform truly, when in accepting it he said "if there was anything in it, it was so covered up

[1] *House Journal*, 327–29. [2] *House Journal*, 840.
[3] *American*, February 25. [4] Johnston: "American Politics," 175.
[5] For entire platform, see Appendix B.

with verbiage that a President would be elected before the people would find out what it was all about."[1]

The Democratic National Convention met in Cincinnati on the second of June and nominated James Buchanan and John C. Breckenbridge.[2] On the seventeenth of the same month the first Republican National Convention met in Philadelphia and nominated John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton.[3] The City,[4] State,[5] and National[6] Conventions of the Old Line Whigs met in Baltimore, and endorsed the nominations (but not the platform) of the Know Nothing party.[7] The limits of this monograph do not admit of a consideration of this great national contest, but some of its principles will be discussed in the next chapter on the causes of the success of the Know Nothings in Maryland.[8] We must turn away from the broad vision of national affairs and confine our attention to the more restricted field of local and State politics

The Maryland campaign was waged vigorously, but the chief interest was centered in Baltimore. Here the presidential canvass was carried on concurrently with the local campaign for the Mayoralty, and for members of the City Council. The candidates for the former office had both been railroad presidents, and charges were made against each in relation to the strikes in order to get the workingmen's vote.[9] The Know Nothing nominee was Thomas Swann,[10] who had been president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and his opponent was Robert Clinton

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[1] "Von Holst," V, 259.

[2] James Ford Rhodes: "History of the United States from Compromise of 1850," II, 171. [3] *Ibid.*, 183.

[4] June 30. [5] July 10. [6] September 17 and 18.

[7] *Sun, American*, September 18 and 19.

[8] An admirable treatment of this campaign and the entire period in all its aspects is given by Mr. James Ford Rhodes in the second volume of his "History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850." The fifth volume of Von Holst also treats it at great length. [9] *Sun*, October 7, 1856.

[10] *Sun, American*, September 23, 1856.

Wright,[1] an ex-president of the Baltimore and Susquehanna, now the Northern Central Railroad.

If the campaign of the preceding year had been exciting and disorderly, this one was doubly so. Fighting and rioting seemed to be the order of the day. On September 11, the newly organized Republican party attempted to hold a meeting in Baltimore.[2] Only about thirty or forty persons were present, while a mob of about two thousand howled outside of the hall and finally broke up the meeting.[3] The same week was also characterized by three other riots of a more or less serious character.[4] A favorite method was for the clubs to cut down the flag poles which had been raised by the opposing party. A few days before the election the Democrats tore down a Know Nothing banner, and the usual riot resulted. The Democrats took refuge in a house on Marsh Market Space, which they defended with a swivel placed in the doorway, while their antagonists showered bricks upon it.[5]

The municipal election occurred first, on October 8. The disorder during the campaign had presaged a riotous and exciting election, and the events of the day did not disappoint these anticipations. Besides the usual pushing and crowding with consequent fighting at each polling place there were two riots of considerable proportion. In the Eighth Ward the American ticket holders were driven off, and their uptown friends coming to help them, the opposing forces met at the corner of Monument and Calvert Streets.[6] Up Monument Street toward the Washington Monument raged the conflict, the rioters firing from behind steps and tree boxes. The Lexington Market was also the scene of a desperate encounter. Here the Know Nothing Clubs, known as the Rip Raps and the Plug Uglies, were ranged against the New Market Fire Company, and

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[1] *Sun*, *American*, September 23, 1856.
[2] *Ibid.*, September 12, 1856. [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Sun*, September 16, 1856.
[5] *American*, October 6, 1856. [6] *Sun*, *American*, October 9.

for over two hours the partisans fought in and out of the Market House.[1] As a result four persons were killed and many wounded.

The Know Nothing candidate for Mayor was elected by about fifteen hundred majority, and the Know Nothings also elected a majority of the members of the City Council.[2] During the night the city was in uproar, and even during the next day the disorder continued. In the Eighth Ward large parties of men armed with muskets congregated on the street corners, awaiting the expected attack of the Know Nothings of the upper wards.[3]

The following from the diary of Dr. L. H. Steiner will give an idea of the condition of affairs at this time:

October 8. "This has been one of the most disgraceful days for Baltimore. From early in the morning until very late at night, both parties have been drawn in deadly array against each other, and Plug Uglies and Rip Raps and Eighth Ward Blackguards have endeavored to see which could be vilest and most inhuman. The so-called American party seems to have the most villainous material in its composition, while the other side has never been deficient in that article. A number of men have been killed to-day and over fifty wounded, more or less dangerously. At some of the polls only such as were of the party predominating at the polls were allowed to vote. Affairs going on in this way and the elective franchise will become a humbug. Swann elected Mayor by a large majority."[4]

October 9. "The day is bright and beautiful, but the evil passions of men seem not yet to have died out. Fights and wounds of various kinds were the order of the day, and on a small scale some of the scenes of yesterday were re-enacted."[5]

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[1] *Sun, American*, October 9.

[2] First Branch, Know Nothing 13, Democrat 7; Second Branch, Know Nothing 5, Democrat 5. [3] *American*, October 10.

[4] B. C. "Steiner: Citizenship and Suffrage in Maryland," 39. [5] *Ibid.*

During the interval between this and the presidential election an effort was made to prevent a recurrence of such riotous scenes. A committee of citizens waited upon the Mayor and requested him to call the City Council in extra session in order to make some special preparations against disorder.[1] This the Mayor refused to do, stating that he did not fear a recurrence of the disorder, and adding that he had made such arrangement as would insure the peace of the city.[2] What these arrangements were the Mayor did not state at the time, but on October 31 he ordered the whole Light Division of Infantry to be under arms and equipped at their armories at eight o'clock of the day of election.[3] The order was afterwards countermanded but the troops were ordered to keep themselves in readiness.[4] The Governor also came to Baltimore just before the election and proffered his services to assist in maintaining order. The Mayor coolly repulsed his overtures, and the election being too near at hand to accomplish anything, the Governor was compelled to retire.[5]

The events of the day proved that the fears were not ill founded. Fighting and rioting occurred in various parts of the city, but the most serious affair was in and around Belair Market. The fighting here began about three o'clock and continued desperately until dark. The Know Nothings brought with them a small cannon mounted on wheels, which was loaded with all kinds of missiles. The Democrats, however, overpowered them and got possession of the cannon, and the high constable and twenty policemen were not able to prevent the rioters from carrying it off.[6] As a result of this fighting we find a list of ten killed and over two hundred and fifty wounded, making a total of fourteen killed in the two elections. We have the following from Dr. Steiner's diary:

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[1] *Sun, American*, October 27. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Sun*, November 1.
[4] *Sun*, November 3. [5] Governor's Message, 1858, 21.
[6] *Sun, American*, Nov. 5.

November 4. "The usual amount of rioting made its appearance during the day and after the plan of the last election day. Wounding, maiming and killing were not infrequent. When will the executive of the city be able to manage its internal affairs?"[1]

The result of the election was the complete success of the Know Nothings in the State. They carried the city of Baltimore by over seven thousand majority and the State by over eight thousand. The party alignment in the various counties was practically the same as that of the preceding year. Only in Maryland, however, was the party successful. The straddle over the slavery question had been a failure. It was a cry of peace, peace, where there was no peace. The slave States went solidly for Buchanan and in addition he carried Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois and California, giving him 174 electoral votes. Fremont received only 114. In the State elections in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire the Know Nothings were nominally victorious, but their candidates were really Republicans and in the national contest these States were all carried by Fremont, the Republican candidate. The national aspirations of the Know Nothings had vanished into thin air. In the North where they had shown their greatest strength, they had served as a bridge between the old Whig party and the Republican party. In the South the party still existed to a slight extent in a desultory way in local affairs but it never carried another election, except in the State of Maryland.

We have seen that when the Know Nothings attempted to "rough" the elections the Democrats met them in the same manner, and in many cases the Democrats were the aggressors. Although the disorder and violence increased to a great extent during the Know Nothing days, the Know Nothings were not the originators of this disorder. In the Constitutional Convention of 1850 we

[1] Steiner, 39.

find numerous complaints against the rowdies in the city of Baltimore, who went from poll to poll committing acts of violence and interfering with the elections.[1] In the same year we find the practice of cooping voters in full sway and the Mayor[2] of the city only escaped being cooped by the swiftness of his horse.[3] In the campaign of that year a gang of rowdies, known as the "Reubenites," were especially prominent in creating street fights.[4] Not only were fights between rival factions frequent, but crime and rowdyism of all kinds were so prevalent that the newspapers complained that it was unsafe for peaceable citizens to walk the streets at night.[5]

The papers of the time are full of reports of the prevalent disorder, and in 1852 when the Know Nothing order was just beginning its secret operations we hear frequent complaints against the lawlessness then prevalent in the city.[6] Holidays and Sundays especially were the days on which disorder was most common. If one of these passed without disorder it was the subject of congratulation for the newspapers on the next day. The disorders became so frequent that Mr. George William Brown took occasion to make it the subject of an address at the Maryland Institute on March 11, 1853. After commenting upon the increasing lawlessness, the speaker read from a newspaper[7] the record of the happenings in the city on the previous Thanksgiving Day. After enumerating the general disorder he tells of two attempts of highway robbery upon respectable citizens, followed by "a case of incendiarism of an outhouse, the flames of which communicated to a dwelling on Saratoga Street, but the event is passed over without much notice, as if it were an ordinary occurrence, as in fact it really was. And then we have an account of two riots, one on Thanks-

[1] Steiner, 36. "Debates—Convention 1850," 32, 36, 64.
[2] Elijah Stansbury.
[3] *Clipper*, October 8, 1850.
[4] *Ibid.*, October 10.
[5] *Ibid.*, September 11, October 24, 1850.
[6] Editorials in *American*, November 11, 17, December 1, 17, 1852.
[7] *Sun*, November 27, 1852.

giving night and the other on the afternoon of the previous day. Persons connected with different fire companies were the combatants. Pitched battles were fought, muskets, pistols and other dangerous weapons used. Various persons were injured, but most of them were carried from the ground before their names were ascertained."[1]

It was essentially an age of disorder. In the light of subsequent events this period seemed, as John Quincy Adams said of the struggle over the admission of Missouri, "A mere preamble—a title page to a great tragic volume."[2] Not only men, but almost every boy, carried a pistol, and did not hesitate to use it.[3] Drunkenness and debauchery were also common.[4] But probably the most frequent cause of disorder were the volunteer fire companies. The rivalry between the various companies was intense, and hardly a fire occurred but what there was a free fight between the members and adherents of the various companies. Besides the natural rivalry between the companies, the engine houses were also the center of political organization,[5] and this helped to increase the disorder. Buildings were frequently set on fire merely for the purpose of bringing out the companies and the resulting fight.[6]

One cause of the disorder was the extremely loose organization of the police department. Prior to 1857, the force consisted of one day policeman in each ward and the night watchmen.[7] The officers were not uniformed, with very little discipline, and with no facilities for ferreting out crime. The police were often chosen for political reasons and taken from the very roughs whom it was their duty to

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[1] *American*, March 18, 1853. [2] Diary, IV, 502.

[3] *American*, September 27, 1856. A deputation of boys visits the Mayor and ask to have their fire-arms restored, which the police had taken away from them.

[4] Mayor's Message, 1858. [5] *Sun*, September 23, 1857.

[6] In 1858 of 255 fires, 130 were of incendiary origin. Mayor's Message, 1859.

[7] Folsom: "Our Police," 203 ff.

subdue. In 1850 police officers were even reported to be engaged in cooping, and one is said to have been hurt while standing guard over one of these coops.[1]

With such a general state of lawlessness, and such a police organization, it is little to be wondered at that election day was the occasion of disorder and bloodshed. Add to this the fact that there was only one polling place in each ward, and the resulting crowding and pushing easily develops into more extended disorder. The maintenance of a challenger at the window was acknowledged to have been a question of muscle.[2] The lack of any registration of voters gave an incentive to fraud, and it was generally admitted as early as 1850.[3] The voter merely presented himself before the judges, and proved his right to vote as best he could.

I have given these facts at some length to show that the Know Nothing party was not the originator of such methods at elections. Indeed, not long after the party started, the originators were swept aside and the party was in the control of those desiring offices. These men helped to support the clubs, and many of the old members raised their voice in protest against such violent measures.

These clubs were also characteristic of the politics of the time, and were peculiar to neither party. They were modeled after the Empire Club of New York, the great Democratic organization. The names of these clubs in themselves are valuable as reflecting the character of the politics of the day. Among the American clubs were the Black Snakes, the Tigers, the Rough Skins, the Red Necks, the Thunderbolts, the Gladiators, the Ranters, the Eubolts, the Little Fellows, the Ashland Club (of which I. Freeman Rasin, the late Democratic boss of Baltimore, was secretary), the Rip Raps, the Screw Boats, the Stay Lates, the

[1] *Clipper*, October 1, 1850. Edgar Allan Poe, the brilliant Southern poet, died after being shut up in one of these coops on October 3, 1849. See Woodberry: "Life of E. A. Poe," p. 342.

[2] "Maryland Contested Election, 808."

[3] Steiner, 37. "Debates—Convention 1850," 58, 62.

Hard Times, the Dips, the Plug Uglies, and the Blood Tubs. The latter acquired their name from the fact that at one of the elections a tub of blood was brought from a nearby slaughter house, and this was applied very freely to the persons of foreign voters in order to frighten the others.[1] The Democratic clubs were not far behind in the matter of euphonious names, for among them were numbered the Bloody Eights, the Double Pumps, the Calithumpians, the Ferry Road Hunters, the Gumballs, the Peelers, the Pluckers, the Shad Hoes, the Bloats, and the Butt Enders.

Nor was Baltimore alone in such a troubled experience, as every city of any size in the country was going through an era of disorder and riot. The newspapers and magazines are full of accounts of riots and outrages. The following extract will give an idea of life in American cities: "What Dante says of the Tuscan City is, in a ten-fold degree, true of our great commercial metropolis—heart, soul and center as it is of the life and enterprise of the Republic. Its growth outstrips all calculation; its luxury is not less reduplicative and its corruption is unspeakable. * * * The supremacy of the Empire Club at the ballot box is confessed in our highest Federal elections. On the spot, you are informed that the mob has elected itself to the magistracy of the city, and that the watchmen are themselves thieves. * * * Not to dwell on other numerous details, which are familiar to all readers of the newspapers, and touching lightly upon the negro and fire riots of Philadelphia, we are sorry to learn that the beautiful city of Baltimore finds it proverbial wealth and refinement suddenly surrounded by a ruffianism more brutal and more aggressive than has been heretofore imagined a possibility in America."[2] And this was written as early as April, 1853.

I have traced the history of the Know Nothing party

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[1] "Maryland Contested Election," 829. *Clipper*, November 9, 1855.
[2] "Religion for the Republic," *Church Review*, April, 1853.

in Maryland down through the year 1856. This year divides the history of the party into two distinct periods. The campaign of 1856 was its first and last campaign as a national party. In the spring of 1857 the National Council met and recommended that each State should be allowed to adopt such a platform as it deemed best.[1] After this date principles are wholly lost sight of and the party is ruled entirely by the clubs and the aspirants for office. The Democratic party, defeated and disheartened, and hopelessly divided into rotators and anti-rotators, no longer offered an effective resistance. Hereafter we do not have the bloody riots which characterized the first period. The fighters of the Democracy, beaten and outnumbered, refused to give battle, and some, eager to be on the winning side, joined the ranks of the Know Nothings, and the latter had sense enough to leave the Eighth Ward, the stronghold of the Irish, in the undisputed sway of the Democrats. From this time the election disorder consists in intimidating and in sticking awls into peaceful citizens. But these events can best be considered in their proper place. The next chapter will be devoted to the consideration of the causes of Know Nothing success in this first period.

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[1] June 2, at Louisville.

III. CAUSES OF THE SUCCESS OF THE KNOW NOTHINGS.

In considering the causes of the success of the party in Maryland, we shall first take up the opposition to the foreigners. It is far beyond the scope of this monograph to consider the effect of immigration upon American civilization or the development of the country. I shall merely consider the conditions which led to opposition to the foreigner at this time. The late forties and the early fifties were years unprecedented in the number of immigrants who came into the country. Never before and not for twenty years afterward was there such a rush of immigrants as between 1850 and 1855. The immigration was 408,828 in 1851, 397,343 in 1852, 400,474 in 1853, 460,474 in 1854.[1] In Maryland there are no figures to show the number of foreign settlers each year, as many of the immigrants arriving at Baltimore went through to the West, and many also came to Maryland who had landed at the Northern ports. However, we may take the figures of the census of 1860 as approximately representing the proportion of foreign population in Maryland, as there was a great falling off in the immigration after 1854, and the foreign-born population did not increase in any larger ratio than the natives. In 1860 the total white population in the State was 599,860. Of these the foreign-born numbered 77,536, or a little over eleven per cent. of the entire population. This, however, was not evenly distributed, but was mostly in the city of Baltimore. Here the total population was 212,418, while

[1] House Executive Documents, 34th Congress, 3d Session, No. 78, 37. Also Brownell: "History of Immigration," 153. The figures vary slightly in the different reports, but not enough to make any material difference.

the foreign-born numbered 52,497, or over twenty-four per cent. of the entire white population of the city. This left the proportion of foreign-born to the native population in the entire State outside of Baltimore a little over six per cent. Of the 52,497 foreign-born citizens in Baltimore, 32,613 were Germans and 15,536 were Irish.[1]

As the stream of immigration rose higher and higher, it could not help but stir up apprehension, and it was feared that the United States would be swamped in the ever-increasing tide. At various times in the history of the country opposition has cropped out against the immigrants, Notably in the Alien Act of 1798 and in the short-lived Native American movement in 1844-45. To the natives in the fifties it appeared that this was a part of the work of the Holy Alliance in its endeavors to suppress democracy.[2] Men in Congress gravely gave vent to their fears that the country was endangered by this immigration, and it was pointed out how easy it would be for a foreign power to send an army of a hundred thousand men to this country in the guise of immigrants.[3] Furthermore, the Duke of Richmond was reported to have said that the European governments were determined upon our destruction, and that by sending over the low population of Europe we would be plunged into civil war and discord, and a despotism would result.[4]

The fears were increased by the conduct of the immigrants themselves, and especially of the Germans. Indeed, many of the latter had come to this country after the suppression of the revolutionary outbreaks in Europe in 1848, expecting to return within a few months and to recom-

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[1] Census 1860. "Volume on Population," xxxi.

[2] Robertson: "The American Party, its Principles, Objects and Hopes," 15.

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 2d Session, 33d Congress. Appendix, 94.

[4] "Reasons for Abandoning the Old Whig and Democratic Parties," 9.

mence their opposition to the governments.[1] These Germans made no effort to Americanize themselves,[2] and in fact they thought that all America would be Germanized.[3] This was to be accomplished by the founding of German States in the West and in the dissemination of German culture from these central points.[4] These movements did not fail to be noticed by American politicians, and one member of Congress expressed himself as follows: "The foreigner believes that America is the natural rendezvous for all the exiled patriots and disappointed and turbulent persons of the earth, and that here they are to meet to form plans and concoct schemes to revolutionize all creation and the rest of mankind."[5] And again: "They aspire to play reformers and insolently form associations and devise plans to improve our homely American institutions into the likeness of the bloody and drunken dreams of French and German liberty."[6]

These tendencies were embodied in the demand of the German Social Democratic Association of Richmond,[7] and the organization of a German Reform party by the "Free Germans" of Louisville, Ky.[8] The reforms demanded by the German Democratic Association were as follows:

"Reforms in the laws of the General Government as well as those of the States. We demand: (1) Universal Suffrage. (2) The election of all officers by the people. (3) The abolition of the Presidency. (4) The abolition of Senates, so that the Legislatures shall consist of only one branch. (5) The right of the people to recall their repre-

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[1] T. S. Baker: "Lenau and Young Germany in America," 56.
[2] *Ibid.*, 57. [3] *Ibid.*, 60.
[4] *Ibid.*, 72. A full account of these German movements may be found in the work of Dr. Baker referred to.
[5] *Cong. Globe*, 2d Session, 33d Congress. Appendix, 95.
[6] H. W. Davis: "Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party."
[7] *Cong. Globe*, 2d Session, 33d Congress. Appendix, 95.
[8] *American*, April 22, 1854.

sentatives (cashier them) at their pleasure. (6) The right of the people to change the Constitution when they like. (7) All law-suits to be conducted without expense. (8) A department of the Government to be set up for the purpose of protecting immigration. (9) A reduced term for acquiring citizenship.

"Reform in the foreign relations of the Government: (1) Abolition of all neutrality. (2) Intervention in favor of every people struggling for liberty.

"Reform in what relates to religions: (1) A more perfect development of the principle of personal freedom and liberty of conscience; consequently (a) abolition of laws for the observance of the Sabbath; (b) abolition of prayers in Congress; (c) abolition of oath upon the Bible; (d) repeal of all laws exacting a religious test before taking an office. (2) A prohibition of incorporations of all church property in the name of ecclesiastics.

"Reform in the social condition: (1) Abolition of land monopoly. (2) Ad valorem taxation of property. (3) Amelioration of the condition of the working class: (a) By lessening the time of work to eight hours for grown persons, and to five hours for children; (b) by incorporation of mechanics' associations and protective societies; (c) by granting a preference to mechanics before other creditors; (d) by establishing an asylum for superannuated mechanics without means at the public expense. (4) Education of poor children by the State. (5) Taking possession of the railroads by the State. (6) The promotion of education: (a) by the introduction of free schools, with the power of enforcing parents to send their children to school and prohibition of all clerical influence; (b) by instruction in the German language; (c) by establishing a German University. (7) The supporting of the slave-emancipation exertions of Cassius M. Clay by Congressional laws. (8) Abolition of Christian system of punishment and introduction of the

human amelioration system. (9) Abolition of capital punishment."[1]

The demands of the German Reform party at Louisville were practically the same as the above.[2]

These, however, were merely the radical dreams of a small coterie of theorists, and were looked upon by the people as such.[3] If the foreigner had kept out of politics, all this talk of foreign domination would probably have fallen flat. But such an increase in the number of voters through naturalization did not escape the keen notice of the American politicians of both parties, and frantic efforts were made to command this foreign vote.[4] Runners were employed to colonize these voters in boarding houses,[5] and in one instance a committee in New York took one hundred and sixty aliens from a ship just arrived from Liverpool on the day of election, and conducted them to the polls, after having informed them that they became American citizens the instant their feet touched the American shore.[6] The Democratic party seems to have been most successful in these tactics, as most of the foreign voters (both German and Irish) were enrolled with that party.[7] This in itself was enough to set most of the Whigs against the immigrant. General Scott, however, the Whig nominee for President in 1852, made a great bid for the foreign vote when he spoke of a "rich Irish brogue" and a "sweet German accent."[8]

The catering of the politicians to the foreign vote could not but give the immigrants an exaggerated idea of their

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 2d Session, 33d Congress. Appendix, 95.
[2] *American*, April 22, 1854. [3] *American*, editorial, April 22, 1854.
[4] "Remarks on the Majority and Minority Report of the Select Committee on Secret Societies of the Maryland House of Delegates," 11.
[5] *Ibid.*, 12. [6] *Ibid.*
[7] Koerner: "Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten," 403. *Christian Examiner*, 1851, LI, 355. "Principles and Objects of the American Party," 14.
[8] Henry A. Wise: "Letter on Know Nothingism," 29.

importance in politics. Consequently they began to interfere in local politics through organizations of their own. This was especially true of the Germans, who, speaking a different language and naturally somewhat clannish, presented a good opportunity to be controlled as a unit. The politicians also favored this, as it enabled them to manage this vote more easily through a few influential leaders than if they had to deal with them as individuals. The result was that the Germans soon learned their power and began to form organizations of their own.[1]

During 1853 the Germans in Baltimore held frequent meetings in order to discuss the merits of the various candidates.[2] They finally sent inquiries to each candidate for Congress, inquiring: (1) "If he is convinced of the justice and necessity of our organization? (2) If he openly pledges himself to represent us in Congress according to the laws of equity and justice without any reference to native-born American citizens?"[3] Only one candidate,

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[1] *Easton Star*, September 6, 1853. *Cf.* the following from the *Baltimore Sun* of January 12, 1898: "A German-American Republican Club was organized last night at 1000 Hopkins Avenue, in the Seventh Ward, with 150 members.

"The Constitution provides that no one shall be admitted to membership in the club who cannot speak and write the German language. In addition it is stipulated that all the proceedings of the meetings shall be in the German language and that all speeches delivered on all occasions must be made in German. * * *

"Mr. K. Rudolph Sternberg, in a speech at the club, said: 'The Germans, considering their numbers in this country, have no representation in the city, State or National Government. There is only one native born German now in Congress, Mr. Barthold, of Missouri. It was left to him to be the sole defender of the illustrious Carl Schurz, a few days ago when that gifted statesman was attacked in Congress by Representative Grosvenor of Ohio. We must organize and stick together if we are to have any representation such as we deserve in the Nation, to whose greatness our race has contributed so much."

[2] *Easton Star*, Baltimore Correspondence, September 6, 1853.

[3] *Sun*, July 4, 1853; *Clipper*, July 6; *American*, July 9.

Mr. William Preston, had the independence to declare himself opposed to any political organization along national lines. The others were not all so frank, and one candidate evaded the questions by replying that he could not answer, owing to an attack of cholera morbus, saying, "My physical and almost mental depression would have rendered it impossible for me to reply to the letter in such a manner as I desire to do to the German Association."[1]

Such an interference of the newcomer in American politics could not help but stir up the natives against him. Statistics of crime and vagrancy were appealed to in order to show the demoralizing effect of the foreigner (not the German especially) upon American life.[2] There were no doubt among the immigrants some convicts and paupers deported by the European governments. The most undesirable portion of this immigration had also settled in the large cities, and these were the centers of Know Nothing strength. As to the charge that the foreign element was responsible for the disorder, the lawless conduct of the Know Nothing party belied this statement. The industrial competition of the foreigner also stirred up opposition against him. Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, had visited the United States a few years before, and had been enthusiastically received and *fêted* in all parts of the country. The reaction against everything foreign was now beginning to set in.

In Maryland and the South immigration was feared on account of its effect upon the question of slavery. This was really the cause of the opposition to the foreigner south of Mason and Dixon's line. There being no large cities, there was no great foreign settlement in the South, except in Baltimore, as free labor found it impossible to exist alongside of slave labor. It was not because the foreigner settled among them that the Southerners opposed him, but because he was opposed to slavery, and went to settle new

[1] *Sun*, July 4, 1853.

[2] "Madison Letters," No. 8.

free States in the Northwest.[1] Indeed, the fantastic imagination of the extreme pro-slavery advocate, always seeking a bogey, saw "abolition emigrant societies stretching their arms all over Europe to subsidize the foreigner into a crusade against slavery."[2] The opposition was most forcibly manifested on the breaking out of the Civil War. On April 20, 1861, the German Turner Hall was sacked by indignant Southern men because it was reported that a number of Germans had volunteered their services to the government at Washington. On the same night the office of the *Wecker*, a German paper, was attacked by a mob on account of the anti-slavery views expressed by that journal.[3] Englishmen were also disliked because of opposition to slavery, and it was charged that they had come to stir up discord on the slavery question.[4] The Irish immigrants, being mostly Catholics, came in for a double share of the opposition.[5] However, many of the bitterest of the Know Nothings, although of course not members of the order, were the Protestant Irish who joined the party on account of its opposition to their Catholic brethren.[6] This leads us to a consideration of the opposition to the Catholics.

Mr. James Ford Rhodes has said that "distrust of Roman Catholicism is a string that can be artfully played upon

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[1] "Reasons why Coleman Yellott would not have Voted to Censure Henry Winter Davis," 7.

[2] Speech of L. M. Keitt, of South Carolina, in the House of Representatives. *Cong. Globe*, 2d Session, 33d Congress. Appendix, 67.

[3] *Sun, American*, April 22, 1861.

[4] "Reasons for Abandoning the Old Whig and Democratic Parties," 10. It is worth noting that English travelers in this country returned to England and stirred up a public feeling against slavery; yet when the Civil War broke out the aid and sympathies of England were entirely with the South. It is a signal illustration of Cecil Rhodes late remark about "English philantrophy plus five per cent."

[5] "Principles and Objects of the American Party," 14.

[6] Maguire: "Irish in America," 450.

in an Anglo-Saxon community."[1] Every now and then it crops out in Lord George Gordon "No Popery Riots," in a Know Nothing movement, or the latest manifestation of it in the A. P. A. But it required no artful playing to bring this question to the front in the early fifties. There were causes at this time, both general and local, which had a great influence in stirring up opposition to the Catholics.

In its early settlement Maryland had been largely colonized by Roman Catholics, the proprietor of the colony himself being a Catholic. With the increase in the numbers of Protestants ill feeling had developed, where at first there had been more or less mutual toleration. As the number of Puritans in the colony increased, this opposition became more strenuous, and in 1654 the Act of Toleration was repealed and a new act provided "that none who professed and exercised the Popish (commonly called Roman Catholic) religion could be protected in this province."[2] In 1658 the Act of Toleration was again enacted.[3] The Catholics and Protestants distrusted each other, and the opposition to the Catholics, combined with the grievances against the Proprietor, were enough to overthrow the proprietary government when the news of the invasion of England by William III reached the colony in 1689.[4]

The descendants of the Protestants inherited and shared this antipathy to the Catholics, and at various times considerable ill-feeling was developed. For instance, this showed itself in 1839, when a great commotion was caused by the escape of a nun from one of the convents.[5] This nun,

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[1] J. F. Rhodes: "History of the United States since the Compromise 1850," II, 50.

[2] "Maryland Archives, Proceedings of the Assembly, 1654," 340.

[3] *Ibid.*, 351.

[4] F. E. Sparks: "Causes of the Maryland Revolution of 1689," Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series XIV, Nos. XI and XII, *passim.*

[5] A. B. Cross: "Priests' Prisons for Women," 11; also *Sun, American,* August 19, 1839.

who, it was alleged, was of unsound mind, took refuge in a house in the neighborhood of the convent, and threw herself upon the protection of the residents. The priest in charge of the convent attempted to take her back, and, the day being Sunday, a large crowd soon gathered, and it looked as if serious difficulty would result. Only the timely arrival of the Mayor,[1] and the interference of calmer citizens prevented serious trouble. There was considerable talk of mobbing the convent, and a number of citizens volunteered to guard it during the night.

This was only an outcropping of the sentiment against the Catholics, which the Catholics themselves fostered a short time before the rise of the Know Nothing party by their activity in injecting a sectarian issue into local politics in order to obtain a division of the public school fund. It was the old struggle which recurs at frequent intervals, in which the Catholic Church shows itself hostilely opposed to the American system of public schools. The Catholics themselves gave the Know Nothings good cause for complaint against "the aggressive policy and corrupting tendencies"[2] of the Catholic Church. Indeed, there could have been hardly any objection raised against the public schools of Baltimore on the score of religious teaching. No sectarian instruction was given, and even in the matter of Bible reading a distinction was made between the Protestant and Catholic children. The Protestant version was read to the children of Protestant parents, while the Douay version was read to the Catholics in another apartment.[3]

In view of these facts it seemed all the more offensive that a bill should be introduced into the Legislature allowing a division of public funds among private schools giving

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[1] S. C. Leakin.

[2] Platform 1855, sec. 8.

[3] "Report of the School Commissioners of Baltimore, 1856," 45.

gratuitous instruction. At the sessions of the Legislature in 1852 and 1853[1] the "Kerney Bill," so-called from the chairman of the Committee on Education, was reported for the above purpose.[2] The bill of 1852 was laid on the table on the motion of its author,[3] and not again taken up, while that of 1853 was taken up[4] and given back to the committee, from which it never reappeared. Numerous petitions both for and against the measure were presented,[5] the great majority being opposed to it, and in 1853 a mass-meeting was held at the Maryland Institute to protest against the passage of the bill.[6] This meeting was addressed by the most prominent Protestant ministers of the city. Also at the same time a memorial headed by Archbishop Kenrick, praying for a reform of the public schools, was presented to the City Council.[7]

In the municipal campaign of 1852 the question had been brought even more directly into the field of politics. The Archbishop and some representative Catholics addressed the following circular-letter to the candidates for Mayor, asking them to define their positions:

"The undersigned, on behalf of themselves and many of the citizens, desire to know prior to the next election for Mayor of the city:

1. "Whether or not you are favorable to such a change in the present school laws as would secure a distribution of the school fund amongst all the schools and orphan asylums of this city, *pro rata* to the number of scholars, where the rate of charge is not greater than that in the public schools of similar grade; or

2. "Such a change as would secure to each taxpayer the right to select the particular schools to which his portion

[1] The same Legislature sitting in two separate years, owing to the adoption of a new Constitution.

[2] *House Journal*, 1852, 606. *Ibid.*, 1853, 330.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1852, 768.

[4] *Ibid.*, 1853, 551.

[5] *Ibid.*, 1852 and 1853, *passim.*

[6] *Clipper*, April 12, 1853.

[7] *Journal First Branch City Council*, 1853, 545.

of the school tax shall be paid (see Declaration of Rights, 1776, section 33).

3. "And whether or not, if a bill affecting such changes in the present law shall pass the City Council, you would give your assent to it, should you be elected to the Mayoralty of this city.

"To prevent misapprehension for the future, the undersigned waive for the present all questions as to the constitutionality of any school tax."[1]

This letter was signed by B. R. Spalding, F. Neale, M. Courtney Jenkins, and T. Parkin Scott. Both the candidates rather evaded a direct reply, stating that they would give the subject the proper consideration which their duty required.[2] These answers were so far from being satisfactory that there was considerable talk of running a third candidate who would favor the Kerney Bill.[3] The advocates of the measure were too sharp to expose themselves to an undoubted defeat, and so the matter rested. When the Know Nothing party came on the scene, a short time later, their opponents and the Catholics were quick to denounce them for introducing the question of religion into politics, but the Catholics had evidently anticipated them in this respect.

Not only in Baltimore but in Western Maryland as well, was their political activity manifested. In Cumberland the Catholics were said to have nominated one of their own number for the City Council in order to condemn and close a street which ran between the German Catholic Church and some property owned by the priest.[4] It was also charged that the Catholics had deserted the Whig party in great numbers in the election of 1850 in order to vote for Lowe, the Democratic candidate for Governor, who was a Catholic.[5]

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[1] *Clipper*, October 1, 1852.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, October 2.
[4] *Clipper*, May 9, 1853.
[5] H. W. Davis: "Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," 31.

So far we have only considered the local conditions which were likely to contribute to the success of a party which had opposition to the Catholics as one of its tenets. But there were a number of more general conditions which did not fail to be noticed. In several States there had been a movement to take the Bible out of the public schools, and this had stirred up particular resentment. In New York this was especially true. Archbishop Hughes had thrown the weight of his influence direct from the pulpit in favor of certain candidates who were favorable to the Catholics. After reviewing the contest, he said, "The question lies between the two parties, and you are the judges; if you desert the cause, what can you expect from strangers? * * * I wish therefore for you to look well to your candidates, and if they are disposed to make infidels or Protestants of your children, let them receive no vote of yours."[1] Archbishop Hughes was well calculated to stir up some of the Catholics to assert what they were told were their rights. In 1844, during one of the periodical outbreaks between the Protestants and the Catholics in New York, the Archbishop encouraged armed resistance, and when milder measures were counseled by some of the Catholics he retorted that "if a single Catholic church were burned in New York, the city would become a second Moscow."[2] The attitude of the Catholic Church on the question of church property led to a long controversy between Senator Brooke of New York and Archbishop Hughes. It was a rule of the Catholic Church that all church property should be vested in the bishop. The trustees of the Church of St. Louis, in Buffalo, refused to transfer their title, and as a result they were put under the ban of the Church and

[1] Maguire: "Irish in America," 434.

[2] *Ibid.*, 441. It should be noted that these extracts are not taken from a writer opposed to the Catholics, but from a Catholic writer who glorifies in, and commends such bellicose expressions.

excommunicated.[1] The trustees of the church were supported in their course by the law of the State of New York.

To adjudicate the question, a Papal legate, Bedini, was sent as the representative of the Pope. A Papal legate was something new and the position of this one was very peculiar. He came to adjudicate between the Bishop of Buffalo and the laws of the State of New York, and decided in favor of the Bishop. He was very kindly received by the President, and a Government vessel was placed at his disposal to make a tour of the Great Lakes.[2] The populace, however, did not receive him so kindly, and in many cities organized mobs adopted the petty expedient of burning him in effigy. The fact that many of the Catholics and the priests were immigrants and aliens also did not fail to be taken into account.[3]

The question of the temporal power of the Pope also came up for discussion. In spite of the declaration of the Archbishop of Baltimore, that the allegiance of the Catholics was only spiritual,[4] the Know Nothings held that the Catholics owed a temporal allegiance to the Pope which was higher than the Constitution.[5] To prove this point misrepresentation was not neglected. *Brownson's Review*, a leading Catholic magazine, was reported to have said that "if the Pope directed the Roman Catholics of this country to overthrow the Constitution, to sell the nationality of the country and annex it as a dependent province to Napoleon the Little's crown, they would be bound to obey."[6] This quotation Brownson denied and disavowed *in toto*, declaring that his allegiance was only spiritual.[7] While Brownson (who was a recent convert to Catholicism) had not gone to this degree, he had held some very

[1] *Cong. Globe*, 1st Session, 34th Congress. Appendix, 968. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] H. W. Davis: "Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," 31. [4] *Supra*, p. 23. [5] "Sons of the Sires," 201.
[6] "Reasons for Abandoning the Old Whig and Democratic Parties," 7.
[7] *Brownson's Review*, III series, III, 123 ff.

extreme doctrines which almost amounted to the same thing. "The temporal order," he said, "is subject to the spiritual, and consequently every question that does or can arise in the temporal order is evidently a spiritual question and within the jurisdiction of the Church, as the spiritual authority, and therefore of the Pope," and carrying this out to its logical conclusion, he says the Pope "has the right to pronounce sentence of deposition against any sovereign when required by the good of the spiritual order."[1]

In justice it should be said that this view was controverted by Catholic writers, and the *Metropolitan*, a Catholic magazine, published at Baltimore, in a review of Brownson's article, said: "We are unwilling to make any comments on this doctrine. We think it enough to state it, and feel confident that every Catholic in the country will unite with us in protesting against it. * * * Though the foregoing is not the only point on which we think he has adopted extreme and untenable views, we appreciate and approve his writings in other respects, warmly and sincerely, as far as a general approbation may be fairly construed; but on this point particularly, we beg leave to record our most solemn protest against his doctrines."[2] Two other Catholic journals, the *Shepherd of the Valley* and the *Freeman's Journal*, were exceedingly prominent by their ultramontane position on the question of the Pope's supremacy.[3] The former of these papers was discontinued

[1] *Brownson's Review*, III series, I, 48.

[2] *Metropolitan*, II, 1854, 360, 361, also 117.

[3] I have been unable to obtain a file of these papers. The Know Nothing papers and pamphlets contain a great many quotations from them. These I have been unable to verify. Von Holst quotes from these papers, although he takes his quotations from the polemical books of the Know Nothing writers. I presume he has verified the extracts, although he gives the above extract from Brownson, which is false. Of the many quotations of the alleged Brownson passage I have seen only one which had a reference to the source. This referred it to April, 1853, and I have been unable to find it in

in June, 1854, owing to the lack of financial support.[1] This would hardly indicate that a large number of the Catholic population shared in the views expressed by the paper.

Events on the Continent of Europe did not fail of attention. The Catholic cantons of Switzerland had revolted only a few years before,[2] and with some degree of truth the Catholic Church was proclaimed as the friend of monarchy and despotism and the enemy of republican institutions.[3] The activity of the Jesuits and their banishment from even the Catholic countries of Europe was also appealed to as an evidence of the intriguing tendencies of the Catholic Church.[4] These views were also intensified by an apostate priest, Gavazzi,[5] who made a tour of the principal cities preaching a crusade against the Catholic Church. He appeared in Baltimore in April, 1853, and his failure to obtain the Maryland Institute Hall for his two lectures enabled him to pose as a martyr to Roman intolerance.[6] A traveling preacher, calling himself the Angel Gabriel, also made the rounds of American cities, and helped to stir up sentiment against the Catholics.

The opposition to the Catholics, so far as it related to their efforts to obtain control of the school fund, and to inject sectarian issues into politics was justifiable, but this is about the most that can be said. It was a pity that this opposition had been carried on by the slanderous course of a secret organization, which was just as inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution as was the enemy against which it pretended to protect it. But, however,

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this number of the *Review*. Even if the other extracts from these papers are incorrect, which is unlikely, they would be valuable as illustrating the manner in which the Catholic population was represented.

[1] *Clipper*, June 17, 1854. *Metropolitan*, 1854, II, 461.

[2] Wm. S. Balch: "Romanism and Republicanism Incompatible," 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, 23. [4] *Ibid.*, 32. [5] *Cf.* Slattery within recent years.

[6] *Clipper*, April 20, 22, 1853. This was the only paper which gave a report of the lectures.

men may differ as to the justification of the party, and the real danger to the country, it can be readily seen how these foregoing incidents would stir up opposition to the Catholics, and contribute to the success of a party which had opposition to the Catholics as one of its principles.

The slavery question also played no small part in the result in Maryland. Not even a party opposed to foreigners and immigrants could altogether ignore the burning question of the day, no matter how much they might attempt to straddle it. But this very straddle was what conduced to its success in Maryland.

In the campaign of 1856 this question was really uppermost, and had taken the place of the anti-foreign and anti-Catholic agitation of the year before. The Northern members of the Know Nothing party had seceded from the convention when it had refused to adopt an abolition plank, and when the party had determined, in the words of Prof. Wilson, to be "Do Nothings."[1] The entire slavery agitation was condemned and the party proposed to leave the matter in *statu quo*.[2] Even the *Maryland Republican*, which was opposed to the Know Nothing party, characterized its slavery plank as being "sound, Union-loving and constitutional."[3]

This position was eminently satisfactory to the people of Maryland who were midway between the abolition extremists in the North and the slavery Quixotes in the South. Her position has been admirably stated by Governor Hicks in his inaugural address in 1858: "A slave-holding State by inheritance, by her traditions, usages and laws, a border

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[1] Division and Reunion, 187.

[2] "The unqualified recognition and maintenance of the reserved rights of the several States, and the cultivation of harmony and fraternal good-will, between the citizens of the several States, and to this end, non-interference by Congress with questions appertaining solely to the individual States, and non-intervention by each State in the affairs of any other State." Platform, 1856, sec. 6.

[3] *Maryland Republican*, Annapolis, June 23, 1855.

State between those now forbidding slavery and those retaining it; allied to all the States with equal sympathies, and by her various interests nothing can be indifferent to her people which tends to disturb their Union. To that Union she is indissolubly bound by every tie, by every interest in the present, by every association and memory of the past. Her people heretofore have always refused to take part in the struggles for sectional power. Her voice has always been raised for peace and compromise, from the day of the first great settlement of this disturbance down to its unpardonable renewal, and the violation of the sacred compact[1] by which it was settled and silenced."[2]

And at this point it is well to make a digression and show the position of the party in Maryland upon the slavery question. In Massachusets the party had gone bag and baggage into the Free Soil camp.[3] Yet the opponents of slavery distrusted them, and Henry Ward Beecher denounced them in his usual forcible style. Writing in the *Independent*, he said: "One might as well study optics in the pyramids of Egypt or the subterranean tombs of Rome, as liberty in secret conclaves controlled by hoary knaves versed in political intrigue, who can hardly enough express their surprise and delight to see honest men going into a widespread system of secret conclaves. Honest men in such places have a peculiar advantage that flies have in a spider's web * * * the privilege of losing their legs, of buzzing without flying, and of being eaten up at leisure by big-bellied spiders."[4]

Likewise in Maryland the opponents of the Know Nothings, led by the *Maryland Union* at Frederick, charged it with being allied with "Abolitionism" and "Black Republicanism." It is to establish the fact that the Know Nothing party in Maryland was not opposed to slavery that

[1] Missouri Compromise. [2] Inaugural Address, 1858, 7.
[3] Haynes: *American Historical Review*, October, 1897, 81.
[4] *Independent*, January 18, 1855.

this digression is made. Its position can be shown by the action of two Know Nothing Legislatures. At the session of the Legislature in 1856 the House of Delegates passed a resolution deprecating the election of a sectionalist[1] as Speaker of the House of Representatives which concluded as follows: "*Resolved,* That, while we accord justice to all, we boldly assert and will steadfastly maintain the rights of the South to Southern institutions, and we will repel, at all hazards, any interference therewith.

"*Resolved,* That the views in regard to constitutional rights and national policy, expressed in the foregoing resolutions, are the same which have ever been and are now entertained and advocated by the citizens of Maryland, and which we believe will ever be proclaimed and advocated by their Representatives in the State and national Legislatures."[2] A substitute was offered by a Democratic member, stating: "That we most deeply deplore that one of the Representatives of a portion of the people of this State, should in such an emergency, as the late election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, have failed in his high duty to his constituents, and given to our sister States of the South reasonable ground to apprehend that the people of the city of Baltimore are not with them in sentiment and opinion upon the great issue now before the country."[3] This was defeated by a party vote of eleven to forty-four, and the original resolution was passed without a dissenting vote.[4]

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[1] Banks.

[2] *House Journal,* 1856, 539.

[3] This referred to the fact that Henry Winter Davis with five other Know Nothings voted for Fuller for Speaker to the last, when they could have prevented the election of Banks by joining forces with the Democrats, who were supporting Aiken. The final vote for Speaker was Banks, 103; Aiken, 100; Fuller, 6; Campbell, 4; Wells, 1. The Speaker was elected by a plurality vote under a resolution adopted by the House on the previous day. See *Cong. Globe,* 1st Session, 34th Congress, 334, *et seq.*

[4] *House Journal,* 1856, 541.

Again at the session in 1858, a bill being under consideration to cede to the United States jurisdiction over certain lands, the following amendment was adopted: "That if at any time after the passage of this Act, the Congress of the United States, shall pass any law abolishing within the jurisdiction of the same, the relation of master and slave as it now exists in this State without the consent of this State, then from and after the passage of any such law by the Congress aforesaid, the jurisdiction required by the United States, within the limits of this State, over any part of the territories of the same, shall cease and be utterly void and of none effect, and such jurisdiction shall revert to the State."[1] The amendment was accepted by a vote of fifty-three to five,[2] and the bill as amended was passed without a dissenting vote.[3] Many of the Know Nothings were also slave holders, and many of them supported the Federal Government in 1861, not because they were opposed to slavery, but because they wanted to preserve the Union.[4]

Not only the slavery plank of the Know Nothings, but their presidential candidate as well appealed very strongly to the people of Maryland. The national campaign of 1856 was a three-cornered contest. At the one extreme stood Fremont, the Republican nominee, untried and inexperienced in politics, who was looked upon as a sectional candidate.[5] At the other extreme stood Buchanan, who had "been everything by turns, and nothing longer than suited his own convenience."[6] He was charged with having been opposed to slavery in 1819,[7] and also with having slandered Clay.[8] Then he had switched around as a

[1] *House Journal*, 1858, 762. [2] *Ibid.*, 763. [3] *Ibid.*

[4] The emancipation proclamation did not free the slaves in Maryland, as it applied only to the States in rebellion. Nevertheless it had the practical effect of freeing the slaves, and consequently ruining many people who were friendly to the Federal Government.

[5] *American*, June 24, 1856. [6] "Letter of a Conservative Whig," 4.

[7] "Buchanan's Political Record," 6.

[8] Letter from an old and constant Whig in *Baltimore American*, June 24, 1856.

defender of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and a filibuster with Soule at Ostend.[1] Midway between these two stood Fillmore, who represented the conservative influence of the old school, and who had been favorable to the Compromise of 1850. At the same time he was exceedingly popular throughout the State.[2] His having been a Whig secured him the support of the old Whigs, who did not care to have anything to do with Buchanan, and were not yet ready to take up with the new party, of which Fremont was the representative. And this leads to a consideration of the influence of the old Whig party.

One most potent cause of the success of the Know Nothing party was the opportune time at which it appeared. The movement in 1844 had failed because the old parties[3] were still intact and men were not looking around for new political connections. But by the middle of the fifties all this had been changed. The death of Clay and Webster, in 1852, and the crushing defeat of Scott in the presidential contest in that year, had utterly annihilated the Whig party. It was just at this time that the Know Nothing party appeared in the field. The Whigs who had followed in the footsteps of Henry Clay resented the destruction of the great compromise measure for which he had labored so long and earnestly. For this repeal, Douglas and the Democratic party were responsible, and therefore there could be no comity between them and the Whigs. The trend of public opinion in this respect was only reflected when all the Whig papers in Maryland, except the *Maryland Republican*, published at Annapolis, went into and supported the new movement.[4] Indeed, one of the most frequent arguments heard against the Know Nothing party was that it was only a "Whig trick."

This was further shown by the fact that the old Whig

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[1] "Letters of a Conservative Whig," 4.
[2] *Cecil Democrat*, quoted by *American*, November 17, 1856.
[3] *Vide supra*, 13.
[4] *Easton Star*, June 12, 1855.

counties were carried by the Know Nothings.[1] But there was undoubtedly a great breaking up of party ties, and an interchange of votes. The Democratic organization, however, remained intact, and very few of the Democratic leaders went over to the other side, and what accessions the Know Nothings made was from the rank and file of the party. With the old Whigs it was just the reverse. Most of the rank and file went into the new organization, while many men who had been prominent in the party came over to the Democrats. The most prominent among these were S. Teackle Wallis, Reverdy Johnson, James Alfred Pearce and ex-Governor Pratt.

In Baltimore City old party lines were more broken than in the counties, and the Know Nothings received great accessions from the Democrats. The most marked change was in the Eighteenth Ward. This ward had been one of the Democratic strongholds, and it now became the banner ward of the Know Nothings. This ward, adjacent to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad shops, was inhabited mainly by mechanics and workingmen, and gives a clue to the social status of a great number of the Know Nothing party. Other strong Democratic wards which came under the control of the new party were the first, seventh and seventeenth. In 1852 these four wards had given a Democratic vote of 3661, and a Whig vote of 1720. In 1855 the Democratic vote had fallen to 1896, while the Know Nothing vote was 2198. The only Democratic wards which did not show a decrease on the advent of the Know Nothing party were the second and the eighth. The reason for this was obvious, as the former was composed of Germans to a large extent, while the latter was the stronghold of the Irish. Later the enterprising methods of the Know Nothings succeeded in carrying the Second Ward, and in the palmy days of Know Nothing success the Eighth Ward ("Old Limerick") was the only ward which remained faithful to the banner of Democracy.

[1] See election statistics in "*Tribune* Almanac."

This disappearance of the Whigs from politics was more a cause of weakness than a source of strength to their Democratic opponents. The eager endeavor to get a nomination for an office for which there was no opposition caused jealousies, which all the appeals to party loyalty could not allay. In Western Maryland, in 1853, there was no Whig candidate in the field, and William T. Hamilton was the nominee of the Democratic Convention.[1] There was considerable discord in the party and great corruption was charged in the nominating convention,[2] and the result was that ex-Governor Thomas ran as an Independent Democrat.[3] In Baltimore City there was the same lack of harmony. There were fierce factional fights between Joshua Vansant and William Pinckney Whyte, and between Henry May and William P. Preston over the nomination for Congress.[4] After an exciting contest, in which the ballot box of the Ninth Ward was broken up, Vansant and May obtained the nominations.[5] The county papers also noticed these dissensions and stated that the persistence of the factions in Baltimore would cause the downfall of the Democratic party.[6] Add to these troubles the fact that the party in the Legislature of 1853 was hopelessly divided into "hards" and "softs" over the repeal of the prohibition of small paper notes,[7] and we can readily see how easy it was for a compact and well-organized party like the Know Nothings to make great inroads upon the party vote.

In addition to these causes the age was one essentially of unrest, both in politics and social life. In the wild and exciting arena of political strife men did not know exactly where they were. The Nation might be said to be just

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[1] *True Democrat* (Frederick), October 6, 1853.
[2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Sun*, June 25, 1853.
[5] *Ibid.* [6] *Easton Star*, June 14, 1853. July 19, 1853.
[7] *Sun*, February 7, 1853. *Cf.* "The Democratic Party after the Campaign of 1896."

budding into manhood, and was full of the wild animal spirits of youth. The Nation seemed to be passing through the storm and stress period which is characteristic of early manhood. Swayed violently back and forth by the political unrest and sectional discord, many men caring little for the so-called "American principles" of the party went into it looking upon it as a kind of universal panacea for all the evils of mankind. Third parties are very apt to sweep everything momentarily on account of this trait. In the early days of the party the secret machinery also exercised a charm which drew many into it.

To sum up the causes of the success of the party were: (1) A largely increased immigration followed by the radical demands of some of the German immigrants and a jealousy of the immigrant in politics. (2) The interference of the Catholic Church in politics to obtain a portion of the school fund, and the radical and ultramontane position taken by certain Catholics. (3) The position of the party on the slavery question and the personal popularity of Millard Fillmore. (4) The disappearance of the old Whig party, and the disorganization within the Democratic party. (5) The general unrest of the period seeking a remedy in any new expedient.

IV. HEIGHT OF KNOW NOTHING SUCCESS, 1857-1858.

The early months of 1857 brought forth no new incidents in the progress of the party in Maryland. The spring elections in the small towns for local office showed no great changes;[1] in some cases the Know Nothing party showed a gain, and in others a loss, but there was no substantial change in the position of the two parties. Not until June was any activity noticeable, when there occurred almost simultaneously two events which again stirred up interest in the party.

The first of these was the municipal election in Washington in June. Great interest was manifested in the election in Baltimore and there was much excitement. The election was conducted in much the same manner as that of the year before in Baltimore. There was considerable disorder and rioting, and the marines from the Navy Yard were finally ordered out to suppress the disorder.[2] The result was a collision with the mob, attended with some loss of life. On the morning of the election a large number of men had come over from Baltimore, and these, it was charged, began the trouble. The Democratic papers claimed that the riot was begun by the Plug Uglies from Baltimore,[3] while the Know Nothings charged that all the trouble was caused by the members of the Empire Club of Baltimore, who had gone over to help the "loco-focos."[4] The true facts in the case, as noticed by impartial observers

[1] Frederick, February 26; Annapolis, April 6; Hagerstown, April 15; Westminster, May 4; Cumberland, May 12.

[2] *Sun*, *American*, June 2, *et seq.*

[3] *Maryland Union* (Frederick), June 4, 1857; *Sun*, June 2.

[4] *Clipper*, June 2 and 4.

at the time, were that members of both parties went over, and as neither side had any special scruples against "roughing" the election, it can easily be seen how disorder resulted.

While these turbulent scenes were being enacted in the Nation's capital the last National Council of the party was being held in the city of Louisville. The presidential campaign of the preceding year had wrecked the party, Maryland being the only State carried by Fillmore. Indeed, for some time before, the disintegration of the party as a national organization was evident. Massachusetts and the other Northern States had repudiated the slavery platform,[1] and the party had fallen almost entirely into the hands of free soilers and abolitionists, while in Louisiana and California, almost from the start, the party had discarded the plank in opposition to the Catholics.[2] With the overwhelming defeat in the national canvass in 1856 it was clear that the coherence of the party was gone and the National Council passed a resolution "that the American party in each State and Territory and the District of Columbia be authorized to adopt such a plan of organization as respectively may be best suited to the views of the members of the party in their several localities."[3]

In the meantime the party in Maryland had been actively engaged in preparing for the fall election. The spoil was indeed an inviting one. Governor, Lottery Commissioner, Comptroller, Land Commissioner, members of the House of Delegates, and successors to those Senators who had held over during the last session. By law, the Governor in this year was to be elected from the Eastern Shore,[4] and the competition between the various candidates

[1] Haynes in *American Historical Review*, October, 1897, and in *New England Magazine*, September, 1896.

[2] *American*, May 5, 1855. [3] *Sun*, June 5, 1857.

[4] The Constitution divided the State into three Gubernatorial Districts, as follows: I. St. Mary's, Charles, Calvert, Prince George's, Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Howard Counties and the City of

was quite intense. In Baltimore especially the rivalry was very keen between the friends of Ricaud, Hicks and Purnell,[1] the three candidates for the Gubernatorial nomination, and we find the *Clipper*, the chief paper of the party, making an appeal for harmony.[2] The State Convention met on July 23, and nominated Hicks for Governor and Purnell for Comptroller.[3] Ricaud was afterwards given the nomination for Congress from the first district.[4] The other nominees were D. H. McPhail for Lottery Commissioner and L. W. Seabrook for Land Commissioner.[5]

The Democratic Convention met a week later. Not only were the Democrats divided into factions through the rivalry of the different candidates, but the party was also thrown into discord by the contests between the rotators and anti-rotators,[6] these terms being used to represent rotation in office. Baltimore City was not represented at all in the State Convention on account of disturbances which had taken place at the City Convention.[7] This State Convention was marked by unanimity and lack of enthusiasm; no formal nominations were made, but candidates for the various State offices were recommended to voters of the party.[8] The Democratic City Convention determined to make nominations for Congress and ward nominations, but no others.[9] A number of the members of the American party, dissatisfied with the course of that party, united with some of the Democrats and nominated candidates for local offices and for the Legislature.[10] The Know Noth-

Baltimore. II. The eight counties of the Eastern Shore. III. Baltimore, Harford, Frederick, Washington, Allegany and Carroll Counties. The Governor was to be taken from each of these districts in rotation, beginning with the first in 1853. Constitution, 1850, Art. II., sec. 5.

[1] *Maryland Union* (Frederick), June 18.
[2] *Clipper*, June 22.
[3] *Sun*, *American*, July 24.
[4] *American*, August 6.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Sun*, May 25.
[7] Testimony of Joshua Vansant, "Maryland Contested Election," 99.
[8] *Sun*, *American*, July 31.
[9] *Sun*, *American*, September 4, 1857.
[10] *Sun*, September 17 and 21, *American*, October 10. "Maryland Contested Election," 115.

ings nominated candidates for every office to be voted for at the election.[1]

The State election was preceded by the municipal election for members of the First Branch City Council on October 14. On a small degree the election was a repetition of that of the year before. In the wards controlled by the Know Nothing party it was difficult for naturalized citizens to vote, while in the Eighth Ward the native voters had the same difficulty unless they were known to be Democrats.[2] The police seem to have made some effort to put a stop to the rioting at least, as one of their number was killed while attempting to suppress a riot started by the Democrats in the Eighth Ward, and several were wounded in protecting the Democratic headquarters on Federal Hill from an attack made upon it by the Know Nothings.[3] The combatants had evidently laid in munitions of war in anticipation of a disorderly election, as the police captures included a swivel, together with powder, slugs and cartridges, and also thirty carbines and three rifles from one of the engine houses.[4] The result of the election was a complete victory for the Know Nothings. Compared with the presidential election in the preceding year the Know Nothing vote decreased about five thousand and the Democratic vote about seven thousand.[5]

Such an amount of disorder having occurred at the municipal election, there was apprehension that the more important election for State officials and members of Congress would result in even greater rioting and more bloodshed than had yet been seen. Moved by these considerations,[6] and actuated no doubt by animosity to the Know Nothing party, Governor Ligon determined to use the executive arm of the State to insure the peace of the com-

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[1] *Sun, American*, August 6, 7 and 21; September 11 and 15.
[2] *American*, October 15.
[3] *Sun, American*, October 15.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *American*, October 15.
[6] Governor's Message, 1858, 23.

ing election in Baltimore.[1] Accordingly the Governor proceeded to Baltimore, and on October 27 he addressed the following letter to the Mayor, inquiring as to the preparations made to prevent a recurrence of the disorder:

BARNUM'S HOTEL,
Baltimore, October 27, 1857.

HON. THOMAS SWANN,
Mayor of Baltimore.

SIR:—Representations from a large number of respectable citizens, of the conditions of things in this city, added to my own convictions of my constitutional duty, impose upon me the obligation respectfully to consult you, as Mayor of the city, as to what provision should be made by you to guarantee personal security, and the free exercise of suffrage by the legal voters at the approaching election. The events of October, 1856, both at the municipal and Presidential elections, and the violence of the recent municipal election, which practically disfranchised many thousands of the qualified native and naturalized voters of this city, conclusively established the inadequacy of the existing city police to secure the elective rights and the personal safety of the voters. The citizen has a right to good government. He surrenders his individual power of defense and pays his property dues in consideration of the pledge made that he shall enjoy it; and I am resolute in the determination to exert any constitutional power to fulfill the guarantee.

Subordinately you are like myself sworn in your sphere to put forth your powers in this behalf, and I have come to this city to confer with you, and ascertain what provision of an extraordinary character you propose to make to meet apprehended disorders of a character like those which have heretofore successfully defied the ordinary police force of the city. I shall be most happy if you can assure me of any detailed preparation on your part which will allay my solicitude, and certify me that the citizens may not have the occasion to reproach us as derelict in duty.

It will never do for a great commercial metropolis like this to be dishonored by this unchecked violence of mobs, and it is necessary that the civil power should at once bring under subjection those evil-minded citizens whose acts are tarnishing the honor of the city and State, and destroying the prosperity of our commercial, mechanical and manufacturing interests. Not doubting

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 23.

that you concur with me in these sentiments, and will appreciate the sense of official duty from which I invite your co-operation, I have addressed you this letter and ask, most respectfully, an immediate reply.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. Watkins Ligon.[1]

The Mayor, however, did not agree with the Governor as to the relative sphere of their duties, and he flatly denied the right of the Governor to interfere. Accordingly he at once sent him the following letter in reply:

Mayor's Office, City Hall,
Baltimore, October 28, 1857.

To His Excellency, T. Watkins Ligon,
Governor of Maryland.

Sir:—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 27th inst., in which you say that "representations from a large number of most respectable citizens, of the condition of things in this city added to my own convictions of my constitutional duty impose upon me the obligation respectfully to consult you, as Mayor of the city of Baltimore, as to what provision should be made by you to guarantee personal security, and the free exercise of suffrage by the legal voters at the approaching election."

Your letter goes on to indicate duties which are incumbent upon us both. The constitutional sphere assigned to you as Governor of the State of Maryland, and to me as Mayor of the city of Baltimore, is believed to be sufficiently defined. While I should claim, by virtue of my commission, the privilege of the initiative in any demand which I might consider necessary to be made upon your Excellency for your aid and co-operation in preserving the peace of the city and the rights of its citizens, I do not object at any time to impart to you, or any other citizen, the fullest information in regard to matters connected with the government of the city, in which the public might feel an interest. It could not fail to excite my surprise that in a letter inviting a consultation with me, your Excellency, after pronouncing summary judgment upon the inefficiency of the city government, should have thought proper to refer to the events of the municipal and Presidential elections of 1856,

[1] Governor's Message, 33.

with which, as Mayor of the city, I had no official connection; and to impress upon me that you were "resolute in the determination to use your constitutional power to fulfill the guarantee that the citizen is entitled to good government."

In your reference to the representations you have received from a large number of most respectable citizens, your Excellency would seem to have lost sight of the facts, that by the authority under which he is acting, the Mayor of the city is made the judge of and is responsible for the completeness and efficiency of his arrangements for preserving the public peace; and that the only official source of information, in reference to the plans heretofore adopted, was in him alone, and the officers acting under him.

As to what your Excellency has said about the importance of maintaining law and order in a great commercial metropolis like this, I need hardly assure you that no man has labored more faithfully or assiduously than I have done towards the accomplishment of this end. The events which have transpired since I took charge of the municipal government, and the murdered and wounded policemen, who have fallen in the late effort to preserve the peace of the city and to secure to the citizens the free exercise of his right of suffrage, will sufficiently attest the activity of my labors.

My preparations at the last municipal election were, as is known, of the most ample character, sufficiently so in my judgment, to have met any emergency. That individual instances of complaint were to be found, is not to be wondered at. These are incident to all excited elections that have heretofore taken place in our city.

My instructions to the police were of the most absolute and impartial character, and in every instance of decided outbreak, the efficiency of this force was felt and acknowledged.

At the election in November, in furtherance of the object which I have never lost sight of, in addition to the complement of officers assigned to the stations and the various election precincts, acting immediately in concert with the judges, together with the details by which they will be regulated, there will be, what may be deemed in my judgment, a competent force to ensure to those who may be entitled to vote, the free and untrammeled exercise of their right of suffrage; and I will state it as my belief that unless some unforeseen occurrence should take place, or an ungovernable feeling should be excited by those who are now engaged in the effort to break down the city government, that the election will proceed quietly and without interruption.

As the Mayor of the city of Baltimore I hold my commission directly from the people, and am accountable to them for the manner in which I discharge my trust, the office which I have been

called upon to assume was confered upon me without solicitation, and will be laid down whenever it will be made to appear that I have lost the confidence of those whom it has been my highest endeavor to serve. I can recognize "subordination" to no other power within the sphere of my duty. I deemed it due to courtesy to afford your Excellency the amplest information in regard to the matters to which you refer in your letter, and now invite from you any reliable evidence upon which I can legally act, of a combination on the part of any of our citizens to obstruct the laws at the coming election. But while I am thus frank in foreshadowing my plans for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of the voter by every means at my disposal, I must be equally so in declining to recognize any joint administration of the affairs of this city. The powers of the Mayor are believed to be ample. He has his resort, in case of emergency to the civil posse, as well as to the military arm, which like the former is placed by the law under his control. It will be his duty to use his best endeavors to see that every citizen is protected in his constitutional rights, and that the peace of the city is preserved by every means at his disposal. If, however, it should be attempted to introduce a power in the city of Baltimore above that of its regularly constituted authorities, or if the power should be assumed in anticipation of a state of things which may not occur, to bring the military in contact with the people on the day of election, without an official requisition on the part of the local authorities, I can only express the sincere belief that such a policy might seriously endanger the peace of the city, and lead to consequences which it should be the duty of all good citizens to endeavor if possible to avert.[1]

With great respect, I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

THOMAS SWANN, Mayor.

Being thus rebuffed by the Mayor and co-operation with that official being out of the question, the Governor proceeded to take measures of his own for the desired end. With this object he ordered Major-General George H. Stuart, of the First Light Division, to hold his command ready for service, and Major-General John Spear Smith was ordered to enroll six regiments of not less than six hundred men each, and to hold them in readiness for service by noon of the Saturday preceding the election.[2] To

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 34.

[2] *Ibid.*, 23, 28.

arm and equip this force the Governor of Virginia was applied to for a loan of two thousand muskets, which that official at once had forwarded to Baltimore.[1] At the same time the Governor issued the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND:

I, T. Watkins Ligon, Governor of the State of Maryland, hereby make this proclamation to the citizens of Baltimore:

Having been creditably informed by a large and respectable number of citizens of Baltimore, that serious apprehensions are entertained that the approaching general election is threatened with extreme violence and disorder in this city, sufficient to terrify and keep away from the polls many peaceable voters, unless the civil arm is vigorously interposed for their protection, and being fully convinced of the justice of this apprehension from events of the election of 1856, and of the recent municipal elections in the city, I have felt it my duty to repair to this city to fulfill my constitutional obligations to afford to the citizens the faithful observance of the laws. Accordingly I have addressed the Mayor of the city and solicited his co-operation in adequate measures for the protection of the peace of the city. So far I have received from him no satisfactory response, and being resolved to be involved in no failure of duty by postponing measures which can only be efficiently carried out under the circumstances by the greatest promptitude, I hereby proclaim to the citizens of Baltimore, that in virtue of my powers and duties under the Constitution and laws of the State, I have directed the proper military officers to enroll and hold in readiness their respective corps for active service at once, and especially on the approaching day of election; and I have issued to them full instructions to preserve the peace of the city, and to secure to the legal voters their rights against the violence and intimidation of the lawless ruffians who have disgraced the city, and outraged the elective rights in the recent election.

In thus acting I have sought merely to discharge my duty and insure to the citizen the right pledged to him by the Constitution and the laws, and I earnestly invoke the moral support and aid of all good citizens who value their government and its privileges.

Especially do I forewarn all persons against all illegal conduct

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 30.

in the obstruction of voters and admonish them of the serious responsibility which awaits the infraction of the law.

It is to be seen if republicanism is adequate for its own protection. The Governor confidently relies on the loyalty of the citizens of this great metropolis, and in the hearty readiness with which they will co-operate in the vindication of the city and State from an ignominious submission to lawless ruffians. If they do, all parties will rejoice in the triumph of government, and every good man that the pledges of the Constitution are not an empty mockery. At all events, the Governor will do his duty, if constitutional authority and law are not upheld and vindicated, the responsibility must rest elsewhere.

But there is no reason to fear any adverse result. The Governor will not question the fidelity of the military arm, or doubt its ability for any emergency that may arise. The military officers with whom I have consulted express their willingness to serve the State, and I have no doubt of their sufficiency for the occasion; and good citizens may confidently trust that their title to a constitutional government will be fully redeemed.

Let all citizens, therefore, exercise their rights, abstain from disorder and violence, and trust in the genius of the Constitution and the laws.

Let no man leave the precincts of his own ward, unless ordered to do so by competent authority. Thus he will promote the fairness of the election and avoid the just retribution that will be dealt to those vagrant emissaries of disorder who wander from polls to polls for the purpose of illegal voting, and to deter peaceable citizens from the exercise of their rights; but it is the sincere hope of the Governor, that the majesty of the law, supported by the countenance of good citizens, will make the ensuing election a signal triumph to those who believe in the capacity of the people for self-government.

Given under my hand, at the city of Baltimore, this twenty-eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven.

T. Watkins Ligon.

By the governor.

J. Pinkney, Secretary of State.

It looked as if the dilemma presented itself of the hindrance of the right of suffrage by armed ruffians or its exercise under the protection of the bayonet, either of which showed a deplorable state of affairs among a free people.

The authority of the Governor having been called in question, both the Mayor and the Governor at once obtained legal opinions as to the validity of their conduct. Hardly any one paper in Maryland history contains such an array of legal talent as the opinion upholding the action of the Governor. At the head stood Reverdy Johnson, who had been United States Senator in 1845 and Attorney-General of the United States in 1849, and who was again United States Senator in 1863 and minister to England in 1868. Then came the name of John Nelson, who had been Attorney-General of the United States under President Tyler, and minister to Naples under Jackson. Following these was R. N. Martin. Then followed John V. L. McMahon, the Maryland historian, and also the author of the charter of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. Then came the names of Charles F. Mayer and I. Nevett Steele, both of whom were typical of the old Maryland bar. George William Brown, the next signer, was Mayor of Baltimore in 1860, and was afterwards Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench in Baltimore. Three more eminent lawyers, F. W. Brune, Jr., J. Mason Campbell and S. Teackle Wallis completed the list. The Mayor did not have quite so formidable an array of legal talent, his action being upheld in an opinion by J. Meredith, William Price and Thomas S. Alexander.

Having completed these arrangements, the Governor again endeavored to secure the co-operation of the Mayor, and for this purpose he wrote to him as follows:

BARNUM'S HOTEL,
Baltimore, October 28, 1857.

HON. THOMAS SWANN,
Mayor of Baltimore.

SIR:—I have just received your reply to my letter of yesterday, and beg to say that your views of our respective powers and duties do not accord with my own.

Clothed with the authority to see that the laws are executed throughout the entire State, I cannot comprehend how the city of

Baltimore or its Mayor recognizes no subordination to the State Executive. His power is created by the Constitution; that organic instrument also defines his duties. Has the Mayor of Baltimore any co-ordinate position in that charter, or are not his authority and that of his city the mere endowments of ordinary legislation?

I am mortified and pained to notice that spirit in a municipal agent of the Government, which, if generally adopted, would subvert the whole theory of our institutions and end in jealous rivalries among the chain of officials. Under your view it would seem that any officer of a municipality elected by the people became by that circumstance subordinate to no one, and only accountable to them for the manner in which "he" discharged "his trust."

I will not indulge in any protracted repetition of an error which must rather be the growth of official sensibility than of mistaken conceptions of constitutional position. The natural sequel of such an error is the further implication that my powers and duties are to be initiated into activity by the discretion of municipal subordinates. Do you thus await the application of your subordinates? If not, why not? Simply because you are sworn to see the laws executed, and whilst in general you confide in the fulfilment of their duties, you still hold in reserve those powers of supervision, which are made necessary by the fact that these subordinates may not recognize their own defaults, and their serious bearings on the general welfare.

Is not the city filled with clubs of lawless and violent partisans, whose very appellatives brandish defiance at order, and make the peaceable prefer to surrender rights rather than claim them at the risk of life. Sir, is there no law or no authority somewhere to curb the one class and shield the other? If the ordinary civil power of the city is insufficient, what is the inevitable deduction? Is it not better that you should admit its inadequacy, and be cordially grateful that the Constitution has supplied other powers, and permitted for your aid that Executive to interfere who has not been at all complicated in past animosities?

You mention in your communication that one of your policemen was "murdered" at the recent election. What guarantee is there that a similar occurrence may not happen again at the approaching election, unless more adequate arrangements are prepared for the suppression of lawlessness? I have not come here to empower assaults upon your police, but to protect them, and invigorate every arm that will be sincerely extended in behalf of individual security and constitutional liberty. And I feel that it is a circumstance of just mortification that a State Executive who has repaired to a city in which the press has not hesitated to declare

that the recent election was a "mockery" from the intimidation to voters, should be asked by its municipal head to furnish him with "any reliable evidence upon which I can legally act, of a combination on the part of any of our citizens to obstruct the laws at the coming election."

Is there no such thing as a fact? Does the spirit of party blind municipal officers to that condition of things which all fair-minded citizens recognize? Are there not daily and nightly murders?

It is to be deeply regretted that we should be at all separated in the performance of our duties for ensuring to the citizen his legal rights which violence has thus overawed, and that you decline to "recognize any joint administration of the affairs of this city," when I tender you the Executive co-operation. This fearful responsibility you have taken. I believe that a just-minded community will severely censure this false independency as not consistent with our relative official positions or consonant with that spirit of union which should unite all good men against the bad and lawless. But however this may be, I announce to you respectfully, that I shall nevertheless see that the laws are "faithfully executed" by every constitutional power.

I feel assured that this community and the State will see in this conduct a spirit of no intrusive interference, but rather that imperative duty which they have a right to expect.

Entertaining none but the most friendly feelings to yourself, personally, and desiring that successful administration by you of your civic duties which will redound to the credit of the city and State, I again renew my solicitation for your cheerful co-operation with the Executive, and hope that on a revision of your opinion, you will not see any derogatory subordination which will prevent you, as the municipal head of the city, from uniting in a harmonious effort to assert the supremacy of the laws.[1]

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. Watkins Ligon.

The Mayor, however, felt no disposition to co-operate, and the following curt note sent in reply showed that the Mayor had no intention of prolonging the controversy:

Mayor's Office, City Hall,
Baltimore, October 29, 1857.

To His Excellency, T. Watkins Ligon,
Governor of Maryland.

Sir:—I have had the honor to receive your letter of yesterday's date, by the hands of your secretary.

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 41.

I feel no disposition to discuss the relative powers of your office and mine, or the other points referred to in your letter.

Your Excellency has thought proper to visit the city, and upon representation which you have deemed sufficient, to place its inhabitants under military supervision. The responsibility is with your Excellency.

In the exercise of my functions I shall be governed by the authority of the law, and, I trust, by the support of the entire community.

With great respect, I have the honor to be,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) THOMAS SWANN, Mayor.[1]

In the meantime the military arrangements of the Governor had not prospered, and, to use his own words, "that class of citizens from whom military service was mainly to be expected exhibited first, indecision, and at last, unwillingness to respond to the call which had been made upon the community."[2] During all this time the city was in a high state of excitement over the prospective use of military force. The situation, indeed, seemed very critical by reason of the conflict between the city and the State authorities. To overcome this danger a committee of citizens waited upon the Mayor to persuade him to make arrangements to satisfy the demand of the Governor. As a result the Mayor agreed to appoint two hundred special policemen from the members of both parties, although he would not agree to appoint half the number from among the Democrats.[3] At the same time he issued the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION.

BY THE MAYOR OF BALTIMORE:

With a view to preserve order at the polls, at the election to be held in this city on the fourth of November next, I deem it my duty to issue this proclamation to the citizens of Baltimore, in order that the position of the city government may not be misunderstood.

The following order will be strictly observed:

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[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 24, 43. [2] *Ibid.*, 24.
[3] *American*, November 2.

The police detailed for the various precincts will carry out all orders directed to them by the judge or judges of election, and see that the polls are kept open and unobstructed.

They will arrest and promptly convey to the nearest station all intoxicated or disorderly persons, who may be found at or near the polls.

They will seize and convey to the nearest station all firearms which may be exhibited at the polls or used to intimidate persons from voting.

They will arrest all carriages passing through the streets with rioters or disorderly persons, and order them to be driven to the station.

On the occurrence of any serious disorder, or an attempt to obstruct the polls by any party or parties whatsoever, the judges of election or either of them are respectfully requested to dispatch a messenger immediately to the Mayor's office in order that the same may be promptly arrested.

The citizens generally are respectfully requested to report at once any case of delinquency on the part of the police.

Omnibuses will be in readiness at the Central Station to convey an adequate force to any part of the city where a disturbance may take place, or an attempt is made to interfere in any manner with the free right of suffrage.

The police are instructed to see that all drinking houses are closed on the day of election, and to report all who refuse to obey this order.

There will be ten special policemen, in addition to the regular force, who will be commissioned by the Mayor to lend their aid in preserving order at the polls.

As Chief Magistrate of the city of Baltimore, I call upon all good and order-loving citizens to co-operate with me in carrying out the details of this proclamation.[1]

THOMAS SWANN, Mayor.

These arrangements having been communicated to the Governor, and the citizens committee, some of whom had signed the opinion affirming the legality of the Governor's action, having informed the Governor that they thought the arrangements of the local authorities sufficient,[2] the Governor gave way, and in a new proclamation renounced all intention of using military force:

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 44.

[2] *Ibid.*, 45.

PROCLAMATION.

By the Governor of Maryland:

I, T. Watkins Ligon, Governor of the State of Maryland, hereby make this proclamation to the citizens of Baltimore:

Being satisfied that the extraordinary and additional arrangements made by the Mayor of the city of Baltimore, and with which he has more fully acquainted me, will afford to all citizens personal protection, and a fairness and impartiality calculated to remove all distrust as to the freedom of the elective franchise on Wednesday next, and the object of my official intervention having thus, in my own judgment, and in that of a large number of respectable citizens whom I have consulted, been secured.

I do hereby proclaim and give notice that I do not contemplate the use, upon that day, of the military force which I have heretofore ordered to be enrolled and organized.

And I do hereby call upon and solemnly enjoin all good citizens to unite with and support the constituted authorities of the city in maintenance of order and the law.

Given under my hand, at the city of Baltimore, this first day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven.[1]

T. Watkins Ligon.

By the Governor,
J. Pinkney, Secretary of State.

The undersigned, having been called by his Excellency, the Governor of Maryland, into consultation with him, touching the measures that ought to be adopted for supporting the laws of the city of Baltimore, at the approaching election, and we having been made fully acquainted with all the facts and circumstances which have attended the subject, have fully concurred in all the views and measures which he has felt it to be his duty to take, from first to last.

W. H. D. C. Wright,
Rob't Clinton Wright.

Baltimore, November 1, 1857.

With the two following brief notes ended an incident which at one time threatened to lead to a serious conflict

[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 46.

between the Governor of the State and the Mayor of Baltimore:

Baltimore, November 1, 1857.

To the Hon. Thomas Swann,
Mayor of Baltimore.

Sir:—It is a matter of extreme gratification to me that you have communicated to me the extraordinary and additional arrangements by which you propose to preserve order at the coming election. Seeing in these the composition of a special police, which affords to all citizens the promise of personal protection, and also of a fairness and impartiality calculated to remove all distrust as to the freedom of the elective franchise on that day, it gives me great pleasure to say that I now contemplate no use of the military force which I have ordered to be enrolled and organized.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

T. Watkins Ligon.[1]

Mayor's Office, City Hall,
Baltimore, November 1, 1857.

To His Excellency, T. Watkins Ligon,
Governor of Maryland.

Sir:—I have the honor to receive your letter of this date. It affords me pleasure to know that your Excellency is satisfied with my arrangements for preserving order at the coming election. The assurance which you have given me that you do not now contemplate the use of the military force, which you have ordered to be enrolled and organized, enables me to anticipate a quiet and peaceable election, which, I am sure, will be as agreeable to your Excellency as myself.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, etc.,

Thomas Swann, Mayor.[2]

The withdrawal of the Governor quieted the excitement to some extent, and the election was marked by neither riot nor bloodshed.[3] But while these factors were absent, fraud and intimidation were carried on in a manner only equalled by the later elections of this same party. The police made no attempt to protect voters, and when men were assaulted the police either arrested them or took

[1] Governor's Message, 45.
[2] *Ibid.*, 46.
[3] *Sun, American*, November 5, 1857.

them aside and endeavored to persuade them to leave the polls.[1] The assailants in almost every case were not even molested, and one officer who did try to protect the voters in their exercise of the suffrage found himself recalled to the station house as a result of his pains.[2] The special police appointed by the Mayor found themselves powerless when unsupported by the regular officers, and even in some cases they were told to leave the polls, as they had no business there.[3] The result was that before the day was over many of them tendered their resignations to the Mayor.[4]

At this election the Know Nothings again made use of the device they had learned from the Democrats in the municipal election in 1854. The Know Nothing ticket had a red or pink stripe down the back and the voter that did not have this ticket had a hard time in getting to the window.[5] The roughs at the polls had a regular system of signals to indicate the reception to be accorded to the voter. As the voter approached the polls he was solicited by the party workers, and if he voted the Know Nothing ticket they would cry out: "Clear the way, let the voters come up." Having thus been vouched for he was allowed to vote. But if he declined the red-striped ticket, they would shout: "Meet him on the ice," and then the voter was generally pushed away from the window and into the street.[6]

The polling places were also situated in many cases away from the most populous parts of the ward and in the neighborhood of political headquarters and disreputable grog shops.[7] At one polling place a cannon was mounted at the curb as a dire menace to the opponents of the Know Nothings.[8] Not only was intimidation resorted to, but a

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[1] "Maryland Contested Election," 29.
[2] *Ibid.*, 113 and 114. [3] *Ibid.*, 37.
[4] *American*, November 5. [5] "Maryland Contested Election," 54.
[6] *Ibid.*, 107. [7] *Ibid.*, 34, 20, 815. [8] *Ibid.*, 20.

more positive means of fraud was practiced by minors and repeaters.[1] Indeed in many cases the judges, knowing the votes to be illegal, received the ballots, and then threw them on the floor as the only means of getting rid of these importunate voters.[2] The Eighth ward the Know Nothings seem to have tacitly surrendered to their opponents, and the latter did not hesitate to drive the Know Nothing ticket holder away.[3] That fraud was practiced here is evident from the fact that the total vote in 1860 was only 1266, while the Democratic vote in 1857 was 2135. The absence of serious riot is probably due to the fact that this ward was left in undisputed sway of the Democrats.

With such intimidation, it is almost needless to state the result of the election. Hicks, the Know Nothing candidate for Governor, received in the city 17,850 votes, as against 8211 for his opponent, Groome. It was well for him that the city gave him such a majority, for the rest of the State gave his opponent a clear majority of 1179. The other State officials and four Congressmen out of six were also elected by the Know Nothings.[4] The Legislature also continued in the control of the Know Nothings, the latter having a clear majority in both houses.[5]

An election conducted in such a manner was not to pass unquestioned. On November 25, Mr. William Pinckney Whyte, the Democratic candidate for Congress in the third district, notified his successful opponent, Mr. J. Morrison Harris, of his intention to contest the election.[6] On February 25, 1858, the papers in the case were presented to the House of Representatives and referred to the Committee on Elections.[7] After considering the thousand printed pages of testimony offered, the committee reported

[1] "Maryland Contested Election," 127, 128. [2] *Ibid.*, 25.
[3] *Ibid.*, 876. [4] *Vide* election returns in "*Tribune* Almanac, 1858."
[5] Senate: Know Nothings 15, Democrats 7. House: Know Nothings 44, Democrats 29.
[6] "Maryland Contested Election," 1.
[7] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Congress, 1st Session, 102.

unanimously in favor of denying the seat to Mr. Whyte,[1] but by a strict party vote of five to four it recommended that the election be declared void and the seat vacant.[2] On December 15, 1858, the report was presented to the House.[3] The House was Democratic, but some of the Southern members were afraid to unseat the sitting member, as the Know Nothing leaders said that the contestant could not be elected, and that if the sitting member was ousted an anti-slavery man would be sent from the district. The Kansas question was then uppermost, and the Southern men were endeavoring to have Kansas admitted under the Lecompton Constitution. The threat of the Know Nothing leaders had the desired effect, and when the question came up in the House the whole subject was ordered laid on the table by a vote of one hundred and six to ninety-seven.[4] and no further action was taken upon it. The Southern Democrats thus showed that they were willing to sacrifice everything, even the freedom of elections, the very foundation of republican government, in order to further the interests of slavery. In justice to Mr. Harris it should be stated that neither Mr. Whyte nor the Committee on Elections connected him in any way with the fraud and disorder.[5] Later in the sesion the House allowed Mr. Whyte pay and mileage up to the time the case was disposed of. This however, was not accepted.

Henry P. Brooks also contested the seat of Henry Winter Davis, in the Fourth Congressional District. The contestant did not claim the seat, but merely asked that it be declared vacant, and asked that the House make a special investigation of his statements.[6] This the House refused to

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[1] *American*, June 7, 1858. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Cong. Globe*, 35th Congress, 2d Session, 102.

[4] *Cong. Globe*, Part I, 2d Session, 35th Congress, 102-3, 120.

[5] "Report of the Committee on Elections," 38.

[6] Bartlett: "Contested Election Case in Congress." House Miscellaneous Documents, No. 57, 38th Congress, 2d Session, 245.

do, declaring that the contestant must take his testimony before a local magistrate as provided for by the Act of 1851.[1]

The defeated candidates for the House of Delegates from Baltimore also contested the seats of the members as returned by the election officials. On January 21, 1858, the House received the memorial,[2] and after refusing to have it printed in any form, referred it to the Committee on Elections.[3] On February 16 the committee reported against any investigation of the election in Baltimore, saying that all the trouble was caused by the action of the Governor.[4] The minority of the committee made a dissenting report,[5] but the report of the majority was adopted by the House by a strict party vote of thirty-nine to twenty-six.[6]

The second Legislature controlled by the Know Nothing party met at Annapolis on January 6, 1858. The previous Legislature had failed to carry out the demands of the party, and consequently many new faces were seen upon the Know Nothing side of the House of Delegates. In fact, there were only two members of the dominant party who had also been members at the previous session. The remainder were mainly raw and inexperienced, very few of the minority ever having had any legislative experience.[7] The House organized by electing J. Summerfield Berry, of Baltimore County, as Speaker,[8] and the Senate chose as its presiding officer Edwin H. Webster, of Harford County.[9]

At this session, as at the previous one, the Governor's message was the occasion of the first disturbance of the even tenor of legislation. The Governor committed the indiscretion of giving his message to the newspapers before it had been presented to the House.[10] Accordingly when

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[1] Bartlett: "Contested Election Case in Congress." House Miscellaneous Documents, 38th Congress, 2d Session, 246.

[2] *House Journal*, 1858, 101. [3] *Ibid.*, 102. [4] *Ibid.*, 396.

[5] *Ibid.*, 397. [6] *Ibid.*, 399. [7] *American*, March 13, 1858.

[8] *House Journal*, 1858, 6. [9] *Senate Journal*, 1858, 4.

[10] *Sun*, January 9, 1858.

the message was presented to the House, on January 8, that body refused to have it read and ordered it to lie on the table by a strict party vote of forty-one to twenty-eight.[1] At the next meeting of the House the message was read,[2] but the temper of the House was manifested when it ordered only one hundred copies to be printed for the use of the members.[3] Not until February 17 were five thousand copies, together with the correspondence between the Mayor and the Governor, ordered to be printed.[4]

The strict party vote on the question of reading the message showed that it was not the dignity of the House which had been offended, but merely the feeling of the majority. This was caused, not by the premature publication of the message, but by the reference in it to the conduct of elections in Baltimore. Under the heading, "Lawlessness in Baltimore," the Governor devoted twelve pages of his message to an account of the recent election in Baltimore, and his own futile efforts to exercise the authority of the State Executive for the preservation of the peace.[5] Commenting upon the election in the metropolis of the State, he said: "A form of suffrage was observed under circumstances defiant of the execution of the laws. Riot in its vociferous and most formidable aspect did not occur, but I was made the recipient of almost ceaseless complaints of outrages, violence and organized ruffianism at the polls, whereby multitudes of citizens, native and naturalized, were deterred from voting.[6] * * *

" * * * Before I leave this branch of the subject, I must take occasion to remark, that under a sense of duty, not left to my discretion, I have issued commissions to all those persons who appear by the official returns from the city of Baltimore to have been elected to the various offices. At the same time I record my deliberate opinion that the

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[1] *House Journal*, 1858, 19.
[2] *Ibid.*, 27.
[3] *Ibid.*, 29.
[4] *Ibid.*, 407 and 408.
[5] Governor's Message, 1858, 21, *et seq.*
[6] *Ibid.*, 27.

election was fraudulently conducted; that in the exclusion of thousands of people from the polls, there has been no expression of the popular will; and that the whole of the returns from this city are vicious, without a decent claim to official recognition anywhere, and in all their character a gross insult to our institutions and laws, and a most offensive mockery of the great principles of political independence and popular suffrage."[1]

Such a denunciation of the election by which a number of the members of the House had been returned could not fail to stir up bad feeling. On the day after the message was read a preamble and resolutions were offered,[2] censuring the Governor for his interference. The allegations of the Governor were denounced as a "libel upon the people of that great commercial metropolis of our State,"[3] and the interposition of the Governor characterized as "ill-advised, reckless, unnecessary, and dangerous to the peace of the city."[4] The expression used in the Governor's proclamation, "let no man leave the precincts of his own ward," was pronounced "without authority of law, a flagrant invasion of that personal liberty so dear to every American heart, and, sustained as it was by such an exhibition of intention to use military force, was an act of despotism unparalleled in the annals of our country."[5]

When the resolutions came up the debate over them was long and angry. On the night of January 22, the debate was particularly exciting and acrimonious, and the House was in session until 1 o'clock in the morning. The House was in committee of the whole, when one of the minority persisted, in spite of the orders of the chairman, in interrupting a member who was giving vent to some very severe denunciations of the Governor. The member still continuing his interruption, the chairman, in the excitement, left the chair and advanced upon the member and declared

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[1] Governor's Message, 1858, 28.
[2] *House Journal*, 1858, 37.
[3] *Ibid.*, 39.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*

that he would compel him to take his seat. A scene of wild disorder and confusion followed. Many of the members were known to be armed, and it seemed as if serious trouble would ensue. Just at this moment the Speaker sprang into the chair, declared the committee dissolved, and called the House to order.[1] The previous question having been called, the resolutions were passed by a strict party vote.[2] The Senate also adopted the resolutions by a party vote of ten to four.[3]

The dominant party let no opportunity escape for denouncing the action of the Governor. The House committee on the Contingent Fund censured the Governor for his expenditure of $1712.44 for freight on the muskets borrowed from the Governor of Virginia, and for the purchase of cartridges.[4] The majority of the committee protested against such a use of the State's money,[5] but as the Governor was the sole judge of such expenditures, the House could take no further action. Governor Hicks, in his inaugural address on January 13, 1858, also took occasion to pay his respects to his predecessor for his action in the election in Baltimore.[6]

Although the membership of the House had been almost entirely changed, yet the majority in the House, just as in the preceding one, seemed to care very little for the pet principles of the party. Indeed, public sentiment seems to have changed. Whereas, in the Legislature of 1856 numerous petitions had been presented praying for the suppression of convents and nunneries,[7] at this session the only petition of this kind was from the Rev. A. B. Cross, who had been so active in the previous agitation.[8] The petition was referred to the Committee on Judiciary,[9] from

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[1] "Baltimore, Past and Present," 190, 192.
[2] *House Journal*, 121, *et seq.* [3] *Senate Journal*, 1858, 152.
[4] *House Journal*, 1858, 477, House Document, L, 1. [5] *Ibid.*, 2.
[6] *Vide* Inaugural Address, 10-12.
[7] *House and Senate Journals*, 1856, *passim.*
[8] *House Journal*, 1858, 281. [9] *Ibid.*, 282.

which it never emerged. Nor did a bill to prohibit the State courts from granting naturalization certificates share a much better fate. The bill got as far as its second reading, but a motion to suspend the rules for its third reading was lost,[1] and the bill was heard of no more.

If the Legislature was lax in these original precepts of the party, it was not at all slow in passing a measure which might look to a perpetuation of the power of the party. This measure was to submit to the voters the question of calling a convention to frame a new Constitution.[2] While the existing Constitution had been recognized as not being all that could be desired,[3] yet there had been no agitation of the subject during the preceding campaign, nor had it been demanded by the people. The Constitution provided that after each census the question of calling a Constitutional Convention should be submitted to a vote of the people.[4] This would bring up the question in the regular course of events in 1861, and after seven years' service it seemed strange to call a new convention within three years of the regular time.

The real object of the proposed convention, it was charged, was to provide offices for the Know Nothings by concentrating the appointing power in the hands of the Governor.[5] It was also charged that representation was to be placed exclusively upon a basis of population. This would give Baltimore one-third of the Legislature, and the clubs in that city were to ensure the supremacy of the Know Nothings.[6] It was further stated that the independence of the judiciary was to be attacked, and that the removal of the seat of government to Baltimore was also contemplated.[7] The suddenness of the movement was enough in itself to throw suspicion upon it.

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[1] *House Journal*, 1858, 657.
[2] *Ibid.*, 546.
[3] "The Reform Conspiracy"—Letters by E. W. Belt, 22.
[4] Constitution 1850, Art. XI.
[5] *Maryland Union* (Frederick), March 11 and May 20, 1858.
[6] *Ibid.*, March 11.
[7] *Ibid.*, May 13 and 20.

On March 1 and 2, the bill was taken up in the House, and the action on the amendments offered seemed to verify the charge of its opponents. An amendment providing that the convention should not be held unless "a majority of the actual legal voters of the State shall vote 'for' the said convention; and the said majority shall be computed with reference to the total vote cast for Governor in the year 1857 as a standard," was voted down by a vote of twenty-two to thirty-three.[1] Further amendments[2] denying to the convention the power to change the basis of representation of the counties and of the city of Baltimore in the General Assembly;[3] denying the power to alter any part of the existing Constitution giving the people the right to elect the principal officers in the several departments of the Government;[4] and one denying any power to remove the capital from Annapolis were all voted down by a party vote.[5] An amendment proposing that the convention should have no power to amend the guarantees of religious liberty as set forth in the Constitution and Bill of Rights was also rejected by a party vote of twenty to thirty-nine.[6]

The House had denied the right of the Legislature to restrict the convention in the exercise of its power, but it was not consistent, to say the least, when it adopted an amendment declaring that the convention should have no authority to change any provisions of the existing Constitution which recognized the institution of slavery and the relation of master and slave.[7] The bill with this amendment passed the House by a vote of forty-four to twenty-three.[8]

In the Senate the same amendments and a few additional ones denying the right of any further lottery grants,[9] and

[1] *House Journal*, 1858, 658.
[2] *Ibid.*, 673, *et seq.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 675.
[4] *Ibid.*, 676.
[5] *Ibid.*, 677.
[6] *Ibid.*, 678 and 679.
[7] *Ibid.*, 673, 674.
[8] *Ibid.*, 806.
[9] *Senate Journal*, 1858, 533.

providing that no life terms should be created were all rejected by a party vote.[1] The bill was then passed by a vote of fifteen to six,[2] one of the Know Nothing Senators voting against it."[3]

This was the only piece of legislation of any importance passed during the entire session. The legislation was almost entirely in the nature of private and local bills. The inexperience of most of the members caused a great loss of time in determining the rules, and much time was lost in the quarrels between the majority and the minority.[4] Nor were these the only quarrels, as there was friction within the dominant party. The *Clipper*, the Know Nothing organ in Baltimore, expected to get the State printing, and with that end in view set up a printing office at Annapolis. But the printing went elsewhere, and the *Clipper* charged that "the man who furnished the barrel of whiskey which defeated the *Clipper* for the printing of the House never received a red cent."[5] It was no wonder that the *Clipper* rejoiced when the Legislature adjourned and gave "thanks to the Creator of all good that we have just passed from an epoch shrouded in pestilential vapors—blunting the edge of our brightest hopes and spreading a pall over the future energy and justice of State Legislatures."[6]

The first event after the adjournment of the Legislature was the vote upon the question of calling the Constitutional Convention. The election excited comparatively little interest, the main adherents of the convention being the Know Nothing clubs, who endorsed the call with great unanimity.[7] The influence of the party in the city was strong enough to bring out a vote of 5404 for a convention and 3957 against it; the counties, however, came to the rescue and the proposal was defeated by over 8000 majority.[8]

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[1] *Senate Journal*, 1858, 532.
[2] Daniel, of Somerset County.
[3] *Ibid.*, 534.
[4] *Clipper*, March 13, 1858.
[5] *Clipper*, March 18, 1858.
[6] *Ibid.*, March 25.
[7] *Clipper*, May 24, 1858.
[8] *Clipper*, June 4, 1858.

The year 1858 was essentially an off year in Maryland politics. There was no election for State officials in this year nor for Congressmen; and the entire interest was centered in the town elections and in the municipal election in Baltimore. Swann, after announcing that he would not run again,[1] was finally persuaded to accept a renomination.[2] The Democrats seemed to be hopelessly demoralized and resolved to make no nominations.[3] The opponents of Swann and Know Nothingism, however, met in convention and nominated Col. A. P. Shutt for the Mayoralty.[4] The independents did not carry on a very vigorous campaign and many persons supported Swann because "the Know Nothings were driven to desperation and were bound to win in any event."[5]

The election was preceded by unusual quietness and a peaceful election was looked forward to.[6] The election was a repetition of that of the year before, there being no rioting, but much intimidation and disorder. As in the preceding year the opponents of Know Nothings held the Eighth Ward, and citizens who were unable to vote in other wards came to this one and cast their ballots. As a result the independent candidate received in this ward 3428 votes out of his entire total of 4859.[7] The marked tickets were again used, and after the election Mr. Swann had the complacency to say that he did not know that these tickets were to be used until the night before the election, when it was too late to print others.[8] At noon the independent candidate withdrew from the contest, no longer wishing to endanger the lives of his friends at the polls.[9] The result of the election was that Swann was elected by a majority of 19,144 out of a total vote of 24,003.

[1] *American*, September 9, 1858.
[2] *Sun*, *American*, September 22.
[3] *American*, August 6, 1858.
[4] *Sun*, *American*, October 13.
[5] *American*, October, 16, 1858.
[6] *Ibid.*, October 13.
[7] *Sun*, *American*, October 14; *Sun*, October, 29.
[8] *American*, October 20, 1858.
[9] *Ibid.*, October 14.

The City Council was Know Nothing with the exception of one member in each branch.[1]

The outcome of this election was a nominal reorganization of the police force by Mayor Swann,[2] which, however, had little effect in checking disorder and none whatever in improving the conduct of elections. But more important than this was the organization of a "City Reform Association" on November 2, for non-partisan nominations to city offices.[3] It was this association which two years later finally wrested the city from the rule of the Know Nothings.

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[1] *Sun, American*, October 14. [2] *American*, October 20.
[3] *Sun, American*, November 3, 1858.

V. DOWNFALL OF KNOW NOTHINGISM. 1859-1860.

As in other years the spring months of 1859 showed no great political activity in either party. The State Council met on April 6, and adopted resolutions repudiating sectionalism of all kinds, both abolitionism at the North and sectionalism at the South.[1] In the Democratic party fealty had evidently disappeared and the party machinery had fallen into a state of "innocuous desuetude."[2] While there was not much political excitement in these months, yet the disorder and lawlessness grew apace.[3] What efforts the police made to check this disorder were rendered nugatory by the action of the Judge of the Criminal Court, who was notorious for his loose habits and disregard of all the conventions of civilized society and the dignity of a court.[4] A Judge who treated the ruling of the Court of Appeals with contempt,[5] and who was frequently picked up by the night watch for his convivial habits, could hardly inspire much respect for the majesty of the law.

The Know Nothings having conquered and disheartened their Democratic opponents, they now began to fight among themselves. At the primary elections held to elect delegates to the City and Legislative Conventions the factions in the party fought each other as cordially as they had fought the Democrats in the previous campaigns. Open intimidation was practiced to such an extent that the respectable members of the party were driven from the polls

[1] *American*, April 7, 1859. [2] *Ibid.*, February 3, 1859.
[3] *Clipper*, June 30; *American*, July 7.
[4] *American*, September 15, 1858.
[5] Testimony before the Committee of the House of Delegates, 12. *American*, February 2, 1859.

and the party was left to the tender mercy of the clubs.[1] The disorder was so marked that notice was taken not only in the newspapers of other cities, and in some cases greatly exaggerated, but a report of the disorder also found its way into the *London Illustrated News*.[2]

Within a short time the Know Nothings had put candidates in the field for all the offices. The Democratic party seemed utterly powerless, and some opposition was absolutely necessary, as the recurring disorder threatened to injure the trade of the city and to prevent merchants from visiting it to make purchases.[3] Accordingly the *American*, on August 26, demanded that a town-meeting should be held to consider the condition of the city. The matter was given in charge of a committee of citizens and a call was issued for a meeting to "devise some means to rescue our city from its present deplorable condition."[4] At this meeting, which was held on September 8, it was resolved that the president of the meeting should appoint a central committee of one from each ward to have charge of the election arrangements and to make nominations.[5]

This meeting called forth a counter demonstration on the part of the Know Nothings, and Henry Winter Davis took care to pick to pieces the address issued by the Citizens Committee. In this address the committee had used the words "to devise some means of rescuing the city from its present deplorable condition." In commenting upon the use of the word "rescue" Davis took occasion to denounce it as an attempt to establish a vigilance committee and to overthrow the regularly constituted authorities.[6] His adherents were not slow to grasp his meaning and the usual amount of disorder prevailed at the municipal elec-

[1] *American*, August 3 and 18; *Sun*, August 19, 1859.
[2] *London Illustrated News*, August 20, 1859.
[3] *American*, September 9, 1859.
[4] *Ibid.*, August 30, 1859.
[5] *Sun*, *American*, September 9, 1859.
[6] *American*, September 6, 1859.

tion on October 13. But in spite of fraud the reform party succeeded in electing six members of the City Council.[1]

Most of the interest, however, was centered in the State election about three weeks later. About a week before the election the clubs held a grand rally in Monument Square, and the transparencies gave evidence of what could be expected at the coming election. At the preceding municipal election the shoemaker's awl had been introduced as an element of persuasion, and this instrument formed the subject of many of the designs. One of the clubs even had a blacksmith forge on wheels with men at work making awls, and Henry Winter Davis did not hesitate to address his supporters with a huge awl four feet long hanging over his head.[2]

The mottoes were characteristic of what the party had come to in the hands of the clubs, and gave evidence of an open disregard for even an appearance of decency. One paper stated that some were exhibited which no paper would dare to print.[3] The following are selected as characteristic: One of the transparencies contained the figure of a man running with another in pursuit sticking an awl into him.[4] Another represented an uplifted arm with a clenched fist with the motto "With this we'll do the work." Still another was a picture of a bleeding head marked "the head of a Reformer." But the transparency which probably most correctly represented the feeling of the majority of the meeting was the couplet which read:

> "Reform movement—reform man,
> If you can vote, I'll be d——d."[5]

It is hardly necessary to give the details of the election, duplicating as they do those previously described. A new

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[1] *Sun, American*, October 14, 1859.

[2] *Ibid.*, October 28, 1859. "Testimony before a Committee of the House of Delegates," 12.

[3] *American*, October 29, 1859.

[4] "Baltimore Contested Election," 352. [5] *Ibid.*

departure was the use of the awl, which had been first tried at the municipal election in October. Another custom which had never been used by the Know Nothings, but which had existed before their time, was the use of coops for voters. Voters, and many persons not legal voters, were captured by the workers of the party and confined in cellars and other convenient places. Often beaten and robbed, the poor victims were thrown into these filthy places where as many as a hundred and fifty men were sometimes confined for several days without even the decencies of civilized life.[1] It is a nauseating narrative which reminds one more of the Middle Ages than of a free country in the middle of the Nineteenth Century.

With such methods the success of the Know Nothing candidates was assured and they carried the city by almost twelve thousand majority. The remainder of the State, however, went against them. Disgusted with the state of affairs in Baltimore the counties went into the Democratic column and the vote of the State, outside of Baltimore, showed a majority of over nineteen hundred for the Democratic candidate for Comptroller. The Legislature was also Democratic, the relative strength of the parties in the House of Delegates being just the reverse of what it had been two years before.[2]

This election also gave occasion for several contests. The defeated candidates[3] for the Legislature from Baltimore filed notice of contest,[4] and the usual mass of testimony was taken by a committee of the Legislature. The Committee on Elections reported that there was no election by reason of the disorder.[5] On the last day of the session

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[1] "Baltimore Contested Elections," 36, *et seq.*, 145.

[2] House: Democrats 45, Know Nothings 29. Senate: Democrats 12, Know Nothings 10.

[3] Adam Denmead, E. Wyatt Blanchard, Francis B. Loney, Hugh A. Cooper, Isaac S. George, John J. Graves, Henry Stockbridge, John F. Meredith, William Colton and William F. Burns.

[4] *House Journal*, 1860, 10. [5] *Ibid.*, 706.

the matter came up in the House, and the House by a vote of forty-one to six adopted the report of the committee, declaring the seats to be vacant. Twelve of the minority refused to vote on the ground that the testimony had not been read in the House.[1]

The defeated candidate for Comptroller likewise contested the election of his successful opponent.[2] This contest was also decided by the House of Delegates, as that body was vested with the power to decide contested elections to the office of Comptroller.[3] The contest hinged upon the conduct of the election in Baltimore as the vote of the State outside of Baltimore was 33,076 for Jarrett, the Democratic candidate, and 30,584 for Purnell the Know Nothing. In Baltimore the vote received by the two candidates was 5333 and 18,118, respectively. In the contest of the defeated candidates for the House of Delegates from Baltimore, the House had not seated the contestants, but had merely declared the seats vacant, and the election void by reason of fraud and violence at the election.[4] In this case the House threw out the vote in Baltimore entirely, but instead of declaring the office vacant, it decided that Jarrett, the contestant, was entitled to the office as he had received a majority of the votes in the State outside of Baltimore.[5]

The resolution of the House, however, did not put Jarrett in possession of the office, although such was the evident intention of the law. When Jarrett appeared before the Governor and tendered his bond and offered to take the oath of office, the Governor accepted the bond, but refused to administer the oath.[6] Consequently Jarrett could not take possession of the office. In this way the Governor overcame the action of the House of Delegates, as the

[1] *House Journal*, 1860, 893. [2] *Ibid.*, 49.
[3] Act 1853, chap. 244. Code of Public General Laws, Art. 35, sec. 52. [4] *House Journal*, 1860, 706, 893.
[5] House of Delegates Document Y, 23–27. *Journal*, 894.
[6] 17 Maryland Reports, 315.

Know Nothing candidate, Purnell, had held the office for the previous term and held over until his successor should qualify. On May 8, 1861, Purnell resigned the office, and the Governor appointed Dennis Claude.[1] On June 12, 1861, the Legislature, then in extra session, passed an act authorizing any Judge of the Court of Appeals to administer the oath to Jarrett and to approve his bond. On July 9, Judge James L. Bartol approved Jarrett's bond, and administered the oath in conformity with the above statute.[2] Claude, however, refused to vacate the office. The State Treasurer, on July 29, refused to pay a warrant drawn by Claude in favor of Thos. J. Wilson, and Wilson applied for a writ of mandamus against the Treasurer. At the same time the State prayed a writ of injunction against Harwood and Jarrett to prevent them from interfering with the incumbent, Claude. It was on the injunction suit that the case came to the Court of Appeals from the Equity side of the Circuit Court for Harford County.[3]

On October 8, 1861, the Court of Appeals decided the case, and held Jarrett entitled to the office. In deciding the case the following points of law were established. The decision of the House of Delegates on such a contest must be taken as final and conclusive, no matter what may have been the reasons which induced such decision. The power given to the House of Delegates is not a special or limited jurisdiction, nor are its decisions liable to the reasoning applicable to judgments of such tribunals, its jurisdiction is the only entire and absolute one in such cases, and there is no other tribunal which can review it. In case of a contested election for the office of Comptroller, if the party decided by the House of Delegates to be elected, fails to qualify, by giving bond and taking the necessary oath of office, the party holding under the previous election continues in office until the due qualification of his successor. In

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[1] 17 Maryland Reports, 310, 324.
[2] *Ibid.*, 316.
[3] State *vs.* Jarrett, 17 Maryland, 310.

case the party so holding over resign, the Governor has the constitutional power to appoint his successor, not, however, necessarily for the full period between the appointment and the next general election, but until the party entitled to the office shall duly qualify. In case of contested election to the office of Comptroller, the party decided by the House of Delegates to be elected, is placed in the same position as if he had been returned by the Judges of Election, and if, by any defect in the law, or on the part of its administrators, he is prevented from qualifying, it is competent for the Legislature to pass an enabling act for that purpose. When the party declared elected qualifies after the resignation of the party holding over, and after an appointment by the Governor, the appointment of the Governor, in such case, is *ad interim* only, and the appointee is subject to be divested whenever the party declared elected duly qualifies.[1]

The new Legislature met on January 4, 1860. One of the first matters to engage its attention was the question of a proper police force for Baltimore, and one of the first acts passed was one taking the control of the police away from the Mayor, and putting it in the hands of a board of four Commissioners elected by the Legislature.[2] At the same time the Board was authorized to divide the city into election precincts.[3] Those bills were among the earliest passed by the Legislature, the Senate having passed the Police Bill on January 28,[4] and the House on February 2.[5] In its conduct on the Police Bill the Legislature went to an extreme of partisanship and sectionalism which was characteristic of the period. The Act contained a clause "that no Black Republican or endorser of the Helper Book should be appointed to any office under said Board."[6] This "Helper

[1] State *vs.* Jarrett, 17 Maryland, 309.
[2] Act of 1860, chap. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, chap. 9.
[4] *Senate Journal*, 1860, 130.
[5] *House Journal*, 1860, 27.
[6] Act 1860, chap. 7, sec. 6. Code 1860, Public Local Laws, Art. 4, sec. 809.

Book" was a book by H. Rowan Helper, a native of North Carolina, and was written under the title of the "Impending Crisis." The book advocated the abolition of slavery more particularly with reference to the economic aspects as regards the whites than with regard to humanitarian or religious considerations.[1] The book was first published in 1857, and in 1860 it was largely used by the Republican party as a campaign document. Over a hundred and forty thousand copies were issued within four years of its first publication. This action of the Legislature showed that the Democrats were just as proscriptive as they had charged the Know Nothings with being, as it was just as much a part of the religion of the Abolitionist to oppose slavery as it was for the Catholics to believe in the Pope's supremacy. This section was repealed by the Act of February 18, 1862.[2]

It is interesting to compare this section with that part of the law which prescribed the oath to be taken by the members of the Board of Police Commissioners. After enumerating the duties of the Board, the following oath was prescribed: "That in any and every appointment or removal to be by them made to or from the police force created and to be organized by them under this article, they will in no case and under no pretext appoint or remove any policeman or officer of police, or other person under them, for or on account of the political opinion of such policeman, officer or other person, or for any other cause or reason than the fitness or unfitness of such persons."[3] While the Commissioners were forbidden to appoint or remove any policeman for political reasons, yet they were allowed and even enjoined *not* to appoint any person who held certain political views.

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[1] H. R. Helper: "The Impending Crisis," v.

[2] Act of 1862, chap. 131.

[3] Public Local Laws 1860, Art. 4, sec. 806. Act 1860, chap. 7, sec. 3.

In addition to the Police Bill the Legislature petitioned the Governor for the removal of Judge Stump, the Judge of the Criminal Court in Baltimore, whose conduct had done so much to encourage the lawless element. The Constitution empowered the Governor to remove any Judge upon the petition of two-thirds of the members of each House of the General Assembly.[1] The Legislature, after taking testimony, petitioned the Governor in due form, and the Judge was accordingly removed from office.[2] This, however, was not accomplished before the Judge had appeared at the capital, and had a personal encounter with one of the Senators relative to the Senate report.[3]

The Legislature also passed a resolution censuring Henry Winter Davis for voting for Pennington for Speaker of the House of Representatives.[4] This resolution was passed by an almost unanimous vote, the Know Nothing members voting in favor of the resolution.[5] The action of Davis was contrary to the position of the party in Maryland, even the *Clipper* joining in the universal condemnation of Davis.[6] Davis retorted in his usual forcible style in a speech in the House of Representatives.[7] After reviewing the conduct of the Democratic party in the Legislature he scored it in the following language: "Sir, it has always been the striking and marked peculiarity of that

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[1] Constitution 1850, Art. IV, sec. 4.

[2] *House Journal*, 1860, 704. *Senate Journal*, 1860, 584, 637.

[3] *Clipper*, March 8, 1860.

[4] "Resolved by the General Assembly of Maryland, that Henry Winter Davis acting in Congress as one of the representatives of this State, by his vote for Mr. Pennington, the candidate of the Black Republican party for the Speakership of the House of Representatives, has misrepresented the sentiments of all portions of this State, and thereby forfeited the confidence of her people." *House Journal*, 1860, 354.

[5] *Ibid.*, 355. *Maryland Union* (Frederick), February 16, 1860.

[6] *Clipper*, February 11, 1860.

[7] *Cong. Globe*, 1st Session, 36th Congress. Appendix, 117. "Speeches and Addresses of Henry Winter Davis," 125.

party, which now accidentally and only temporarily predominates in the councils of Maryland, that they will allow no opportunity to pass of what they call indicating their entire fealty to the South, and that, sir, always consists in exciting sectional strife, in mooting matters which men ought not to argue, in libeling their neighbors, in endeavoring to make them hateful and disgusting to their fellow-citizens, in giving an advertisement to the whole country that everybody that is not a Democrat is an Abolitionist, and that if any fanatics shall see fit at any time to come within the limits of a Southern State for the purpose of shaking and upsetting the solid foundations of society, there would be found men who, if they feared to join them, would yet sympathize with them. * * * Agitation, clamor, vituperation, audacious and pertinacious, are their weapons of warfare. Of this spirit the Legislature of Maryland as now constituted is the incarnation. It stands the embodiment of that terrific vision of the Portress of Hell gate, who to the eye of Milton

> 'Seemed women to the waist and fair
> But ended in many a scaly fold
> Voluminous and vast,' etc.

"And they, as false to their mission as the Portress of Hell to hers, stand ready, for the purpose of retaining their hold of power, to let loose on this blessed land the Satan of demoniacal passion."[1]

Then, turning to the Know Nothing members who had voted for the resolution, he paid his respects to them in the following terms: "I confess myself surprised that my own friends, excepting four of them, voted for it. I fear that in one evil hour some of them allowed themselves to be frightened. I suspect some of them were afraid that they should be called 'Abolitionists.' Subjected to the torture of voting against a resolution which was supposed to be in

[1] "Speeches and Addresses of Henry Winter Davis," 132.

favor of Southern rights, or of deserting a friend, they could not be expected to regard justice to me rather than safety to themselves. So every man took care of himself. Some voted for the resolutions who went through the elections on my shoulders. They did not know that when they saw away the bough between themselves and the tree they must fall. But, sir, it was a curious scene. The clerk called the name of an American in the Legislature once, and there was a pause; twice, and there was a shuffling; thrice, and there was a hesitating response. Then there was a period of blessed repose, when certain Democratic names were called, and were responded to with that earnestness with which Democrats always respond when aiming a blow at a political adversary. Then some unfortunate Americans were called upon to vote. The gentlemen stood first on one leg and then on the other, in sad doubt on which to rest; gentlemen looked over their shoulders to see if there were not some dust of a coming reprieve, some rushed to inquire of friends whether they ought or ought not to vote for the resolution; while there sat their inexorable and determined opponents, with their eyes glaring upon them and their mouths open, sure of their prey after the fluttering was over, and in they went. * * * Sir, I admire the audacity of the Maryland Democrat as much as I deplore the weakness of the Maryland American."[1]

Such a diminution of the power of the Mayor and City Council as was effected by the law putting the control of the police force in the hands of Commissioners appointed by the State was not to pass unchallenged. When the new Commissioners demanded the control of the police force, the Mayor refused to acknowledge the constitutionality of the Act creating the Board of Police Commissioners. The new Commissioners accordingly, on February 10, 1860, applied for a writ of mandamus in the Superior Court of Baltimore. This being granted, the Mayor and City Coun-

[1] "Speeches and Addresses of Henry Winter Davis," 137.

cil took an appeal, and on April 17, a decision was rendered by the Court of Appeals.[1] Upon the Act of 1860 and this decision upon it rests the present government of the Baltimore police. The main points laid down in this decision were the following:

The attorney for the Mayor and Council argued that the Legislature had no power to appoint the Commissioners, as this was an executive act, and the sixth Article of the Declaration of Rights declared "that the legislative, executive and judicial powers of government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other, and no person exercising the functions of one of said departments shall assume or discharge the functions of any other." In ruling upon this point the Court held that the power of appointment to office is not, under our system of checks and balances in the distribution of powers, where the people are the source and fountain of government, a function intrinsically executive in the sense that it is inherent in and necessarily belongs to the executive department. The sixth Article of the Bill of Rights, "that the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other," is not to be interpreted as enjoining a complete separation between these several departments. The design of this article is to engraft the principles there announced, on our system, only as far as comported with free government. The Bill of Rights is not to be construed by itself according to its literal meaning; it and the Constitution compose one form of government and they must be interpreted as one instrument; the former announces principles on which the government about to be established will be based; if they differ, the Constitution must be taken as a limitation or qualification of the general principles previously declared. If the power of appointing officers is given to the Legislature, it may be exercised notwithstanding the sixth Article of the

[1] Baltimore *vs.* State, 15 Maryland, 376.

Bill of Rights. Section 11 of Article 27 of the Constitution confers on the Executive the appointment of all officers provided for, "unless a different mode of appointment be prescribed by the law creating the office," and under this the Legislature may designate the officers in the law creating the offices.[1]

The appellants further argued that the transfer of the police force from the city government to the Commissioners was unconstitutional, because the charter of 1796 gave Baltimore a local government with all the means necessary for the purposes of government. Among these was a police power to maintain the peace and security of the governed. Furthermore, it was claimed that the Constitution in recognizing the municipal corporation of Baltimore as part and parcel of the organized government of the State, had placed the charter beyond the reach of mere legislative power. In passing on this the Court held that the fact that the Constitution mentions and recognizes the municipal corporation of the city of Baltimore does not make the charter of the city a constitutional charter, so as to place it beyond the reach of legislative power.[2]

In regard to that section in the law prohibiting Black Republicans from holding any office under the Board, the Court held that it was "obnoxious to the objection urged against it, if we are to consider that class of persons as proscribed on account of their political of religious opinions. But we cannot understand, officially, who are meant to be affected by the proviso, and therefore cannot express a judicial opinion on the question."[3] The various other objections urged against the law were all disposed of, and the decision of the lower court in favor of the Commissioners was affirmed. Chief Justice LeGrand delivered a separate concurring opinion going more fully into some of the points passed upon.[4]

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[1] 15 Maryland, 455–461.
[2] *Ibid.*, 462–464.
[3] *Ibid.*, 468.
[4] *Ibid.*, 470.

With the police force in the hands of their opponents, it was evident that the Know Nothings did not stand much chance of success in the next election. In every other part of the State they had been swept out, and only in Baltimore did they still hold their sway. But when the control of the police passed from them, their power in the city fell like a house of cards. They themselves realized this, and it was a question whether they should make a Mayoralty nomination or make a fusion with the Constitutional Union party,[1] which was the successor of the Know Nothings in the border States between the North and South. Most of the members of the party also supported the Constitutional Union party in the national contest, but it was finally decided to make a nomination along the old party line for the Mayoralty.[2] Accordingly, Charles M. Keyser was nominated as the candidate for Mayor.[3] Mr. Keyser, however, refused to accept the doubtful honor, and the Convention reassembled on September 19, and nominated Samuel Hindes.[4] The Reform Committee met on September 28, and nominated Mr. George William Brown for Mayor, and also made nominations for the Council in the various wards.[5]

The campaign was the last fight of the Know Nothings, who had long outlived any definite principles except an endeavor to obtain public office. But while the party had outlived its principles, it had not outlived its resources, questionable though some of them were. In the last year of Know Nothing administration Druid Hill Park had been purchased by the city, and it was arranged to dedicate this great pleasure ground two days before the municipal election with a grand celebration, including the participation of a number of school children.[6] But the lucky star of the

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[1] *American*, September 3, 1860.
[2] *Ibid.*, September 6.
[3] *Sun*, *American*, September 13, 1860.
[4] *Ibid.*, September 19 and 20.
[5] *Ibid.*, September 29.
[6] *Sun*, October 6.

Know Nothings had waned, and on the appointed day the rain upset all the calculations of this great *coup d'état*, and the park was not formally opened until October 19.[1]

As the Know Nothings no longer controlled the police, it was not possible for them to look for any aid in that quarter, either in aiding or in countenancing their skillful manipulations of the ballot box. Accordingly they adopted a device which they calculated would mislead many voters. The name of the reform candidate was George William Brown, and the Know Nothings had a number of tickets printed with the name of William George Brown upon them, and on the day of election his name appeared in the advertising columns of the *American* and *Clipper* as a candidate for Mayor.[2] The notice was brought to the *American* office late at night, just as the paper was going to press, and the trick was overlooked. Otherwise the *American* stated that the notice would not have been inserted.[3] The *Clipper* had the complacency to deny any trick, and stated that the name was all right, and that William George was a citizen of the Fourteenth Ward.[4] The writer has been informed that the latter part of this statement is correct. There is hardly any necessity for comment upon the former.

The trick, however, deceived very few, as the fake candidates received only twenty votes. Each ward had been divided into three election precincts, and the election passed off quietly and orderly. Brown received 17,771 votes to 9,575 for Hindes, and the entire Reform ticket was elected in both branches of the City Council.[5] In the previous year the Know Nothing vote in the city had been 18,194 while that of their opponents was only 5250.

With this election ended the career of the Know Nothings in Maryland, and, indeed, all over the country, for

[1] *Sun*, October 20.
[2] *American, Clipper*, October 10.
[3] *American*, October 11.
[4] *Clipper*, October 11.
[5] *Sun, American*, October 11.

elsewhere the Know Nothing party was only a memory. In the presidential contest of 1860 the Constitutional Union party adopted the "Do Nothing" position of the Know Nothings on the slavery question, but not the rest of the Know Nothing program.[1] Most of the Know Nothings went into the Constitutional Union party, as it still represented the middle path between what seemed to be the extreme parties. In the presidential election of 1860 the vote of the four candidates in Maryland was: Bell (Constitutional Union), 41,760; Breckenbridge, 42,482; Douglas, 5966; Lincoln, 2294. In Baltimore the vote was: Bell, 12,604; Breckenbridge, 14,956; Douglas, 1503; Lincoln, 1083.[2]

In the next year came the war, and everything was chaos. Many of the turbulent spirits who had created so much disorder went into the army and utilized their rude energy in a better cause than roughing elections. Afterwards the Republican party absorbed most of the Know Nothings, the line of descent being Whig, Know Nothing, Consti-

[1] "WHEREAS, Experience has demonstrated that the Platforms adopted by the partisan conventions of the country have had the effect to mislead and deceive the people, and at the same time to widen the political divisions of the country, by the creation of geographical parties; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That it is both the part of patriotism and of duty to recognize no political principle other than *the Constitution of the country, the union of the States, and the enforcement of the laws*, and that as representatives of the Constitutional Union men of the country in National Convention assembled, we hereby pledge ourselves to maintain, protect, and defend, separately and unitedly, these great principles of public liberty and national safety, against all enemies at home and abroad, believing that thereby peace may once more be restored to the country, the rights of the people and of the States re-established and the Government again placed in that condition of justice, fraternity, and equality which under the example and Constitution of our fathers has solemnly bound every citizen of the United States to maintain a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."—"*Tribune* Almanac, 1861," 34.

[2] *Ibid.*, 49.

tutional Union and Republican. Swann, who had been Know Nothing Mayor for four years, first became a Republican, and then went over to the Democrats, being welcomed into the Democratic ranks like a prodigal son, and received the enthusiastic support of many who had bitterly denounced him in former years. Another Know Nothing who became a prominent Democrat was I. Freeman Rasin, the late Democratic boss of Baltimore. Having graduated from the turbulent school of Know Nothing antebellum politics, he has utilized his training in Know Nothing methods with eminent success.

The period of the Know Nothing party in Baltimore will always be looked back to as one of violence and disorder. For this the Know Nothings were not altogether responsible. They were more of a condition than a cause of the disorder. Outside of the police department and the fraudulent methods in use at the elections, the administration of the Know Nothings was good. The finances were well administered, and a progressive policy of municipal improvement was undertaken. Under Swann especially was the financial administration good. He had been president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and had considerable experience. Under him the various city departments were reorganized and the office of Comptroller was created.[1] Various municipal enterprises, such as the purchase of Druid Hill Park, the construction of a new jail, introduction of the paid fire department, with steam engines, and the police and fire alarm telegraph were instituted or carried to completion. These improvements would probably have come in any event, but it is worth noting that the Know Nothing administration in Baltimore was neither retrogressive nor behind the spirit of the times. A rather unique institution was the so-called "Floating School," established by the Ordinance of May 30, 1855. This was a nautical school to be used by the Board of Trade to train sailors.

[1] Ordinances, 1857, No. 8. Mayor's Message, 1858, in *Journal First Branch City Council*, 1858, 7.

VI. CONCLUSION.

We have been considering a period in American history almost unparalleled in violence and bitterness. There has probably been no party in the history of the country more cordially hated by its opponents than were the Know Nothings. Even to-day we find traces of this animus. But on the other hand most of the survivors of the party will speak of it as the grandest party that ever existed. Looking back it seems almost ludicrous to find men seriously thinking that the liberties of America were in danger from the feeble old pontiff who was so soon to have his temporal possessions snatched away by those of his own faith. But there were local provocations which stirred up a justifiable resentment, which, however, soon exceeded all rational limits and sank to the level of bigoted intolerance and proscription. But we must not judge the men of almost half a century ago by the more tolerant and enlightened spirit of the present day. It must be remembered that the Know Nothings existed in a time when William Lloyd Garrison openly burned the Constitution of the United States at Framingham, Mass., and denounced it as "an agreement with hell,"[1] because it recognized the institution of slavery; at a time when Representative Brooke, of South Carolina, could make a cowardly assault upon Senator Sumner in the Senate of the United States while members turned their backs and declined to help the defenseless man, and the assailant was unanimously re-elected by his district, and applauded as a gallant gentleman.[2] The Know Nothing party was a child of the age. It has been made the scapegoat of many evils that were com-

[1] "Life of Wm. Lloyd Garrison," by his Children, III, 88, 412.
[2] James Ford Rhodes, II, 115, 224.

mon to all the political parties of the time. Nor must it be thought that the disorderly faction represented the majority of the party. The word "Know Nothing" has become largely a synonym for all that is bad in politics, but thousands of worthy citizens who did not all sympathize with the rough methods of the clubs, went into the movement honestly thinking that in it alone rested the salvation of the country.

Several valuable lessons might be deduced from the course of this party. In the first place, the Catholic Church should learn the lesson that the American people will not tolerate any interference with the public school system of the country, nor will they suffer any ecclesiastics to interfere in American politics. On the other hand, the extreme to which this party carried opposition to the Catholic Church should warn Protestants against political tricksters who make political capital out of religious differences. Even to-day we see in our midst an organization which proposes to believe that America, with a great Protestant majority, is in danger from a power which cannot assert political rights in a nation where practically all are of the same faith. Such intolerance and fears were somewhat excusable two generations back; on the eve of the twentieth century they are entirely out of place.

Looking back upon this turbulent era what a contrast does it present to the Nation of to-day. Only within a few years we have seen a presidential campaign in which great interests were at stake: in which great excitement was displayed, but which was decided peacefully and acquiesced in quietly by the people. More recently we have gone through a war which was preceded by incidents which were well calculated to try the patience of the people. But throughout it all there was only a calm self-restraint and reliance in the Government, and men of all shades of opinion stood firm together in its support. The majority of voters of to-day, who calmly go to the polls, and mark their ballots in the little booth, can hardly realize how different this is from the conduct of elections forty years ago. To

one who has read the newspapers of the period, the picture of riot and disorder is almost as vivid (and fresher in mind) than to those who lived through it. We are far from the millennium in our civic life; we have many grave defects and faults which are to be remedied, but we should not despair. The only way to overcome evil is to fight it, and if the last four decades have wrought such a change for the better, what may not the next four decades bring forth?

APPENDIX A.

NATIONAL PLATFORM 1855.

1. The acknowledgment of that Almighty Being who rules over the universe—who presides over the Councils of Nations—who conducts the affairs of men, and who, in every step by which we have advanced to the character of an independent Nation, has distinguished us by some token of Providential agency.

2. The cultivation and development of a sentiment of profoundly intense American feeling, of passionate attachment to our country, its history and its institutions; of admiration for the purer days of our national existence; of veneration for the heroism that precipitated our Revolution, and of emulation of the virtue, wisdom and patriotism that framed our Constitution, and first successfully applied its provisions.

3. The maintenance of the union of these United States, as the paramount political good; or, to use the language of Washington, "the primary object of patriotic desire." And hence—

First—Opposition to all attempts to weaken or subvert it.

Second—Uncompromising antagonism to every principle of policy that endangers it.

Third—The advocacy of an equitable adjustment of all political differences which threaten its integrity or perpetuity.

Fourth—The suppression of all tendencies to political division, founded on "geographical discriminations, or on the belief that there is a real difference of interests and views" between the various sections of the Union.

Fifth—The full recognition of the rights of the several States, as expressed and reserved in the Constitution, and a careful avoidance by the general government of all interference with their rights by legislative or executive action.

4. Obedience to the Constitution of these United States as the supreme law of the land, sacredly obligatory upon all its parts and members; and steadfast resistance to the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. Avowing that in all doubtful or disputed pionts it may only be legally ascertained and expounded by the judicial power of the United States.

First—A habit of reverential obedience to the laws, whether national, State or municipal, until they are repealed or declared unconstitutional by the proper authority.

Second—A tender and sacred regard for those acts of statesmanship which are to be contradistinguished from acts of ordinary legislation by the fact of their being of the nature of compacts and agreements; and so, to be considered a fixed and settled national policy.

5. A radical revision and modification of the laws regulating immigration, and the settlement of immigrants, offering the honest immigrant, who from love of liberty or hatred of oppression, seeks an asylum in the United States, a friendly reception and protection, but unqualifiedly condemning the transmission to our shores of felons and paupers.

6. The essential modification of the naturalization laws.

The repeal by the Legislatures of the respective States of all State laws allowing foreigners not naturalized to vote. The repeal, without retrospective operation, of all acts of Congress making grants of land to unnaturalized foreigners, and allowing them to vote in the territories.

7. Hostility to the corrupt means by which the leaders of party have hitherto forced upon us our rulers and our political creeds.

Implacable enmity against the present demoralizing system of rewards for political subserviency, and of punishments for political independence.

Disgust for the wild hunt after office which characterizes the age.

These on the one hand. On the other—

Imitation of the practice of the purer days of the Republic, and admiration of the maxim that "office should seek the man, and not man the office," and of the rule that the just mode of ascertaining fitness for office is the capability, the faithfulness and the honesty of the incumbent candidate.

8. Resistance to the aggressive policy and corrupting tendencies of the Roman Catholic Church in our country by the advancement to all political stations—executive, legislative, judicial or diplomatic—of those only who do not hold civil allegiance, directly or indirectly, to any foreign power, whether civil or ecclesiastical, and who are Americans by birth, education and training, thus fulfilling the maxim, "Americans only shall govern America."

The protection of all citizens in the legal and proper exercise of their civil and religious rights and privileges; the maintenance of the right of every man to the full, unrestrained and peaceful enjoyment of his own religious opinions and worships, and a jealous resistance of all attempts by any sect, denomination, or church to obtain an ascendancy over any other in the State, by means of any special privilege or exemption, by any political combination of its members, or by a division of their civil allegiance with any foreign power, potentate or ecclesiastic.

9. The reformation of the character of our National Legislature, by elevating to that dignified and responsible position men of higher qualifications, purer morals, and more unselfish patriotism.

10. The restriction of executive patronage—especially in the matter of appointments to office—so far as it may be permitted by the Constitution, and consistent with the public good.

11. The education of the youth of our country in schools provided by the State, which schools shall be common to all, without distinction of creed or party, and free from any

influence or direction of a denominational or partisan character.

And, inasmuch as Christianity, by the Constitutions of nearly all the States; by the decisions of most eminent judicial authorities, and by the consent of the people of America, is considered an element of our political system, and the Holy Bible is at once the source of Christianity and the depository and fountain of all civil and religious freedom, we oppose every attempt to exclude it from the schools thus established in the States.

12. The American party, having arisen upon the ruins, and in spite of the opposition of the Whig and Democratic parties, cannot be held in any manner responsible for the obnoxious acts or violated pledges of either. And the systematic agitation of the slavery question by those parties having elevated sectional hostility into a positive element of political power, and brought our institutions into peril, it has, therefore, become the imperative duty of the American party to interpose for the purpose of giving peace to the country and perpetuity to the Union. And as experience has shown it impossible to reconcile opinions so extreme as those which separate the disputants, and as there can be no dishonor in submitting to the laws, the National Council has deemed it the best guarantee of common justice and of future peace to abide by and maintain the existing laws upon the subject of slavery, as a final and conclusive settlement of that subject, in fact and in substance.

And, regarding it the highest duty to avow their opinions upon a subject so important in distinct and unequivocal terms, it is hereby declared as the sense of this National Council that Congress possessed no power under the Constitution to legislate upon the subject of slavery in the States, where it does or may exist, or to exclude any State from admission into the Union because its Constitution does or does not recognize the institution of slavery as a part of its social system, and expressly pretermitting any expression of opinion upon the power of Congress to establish

or prohibit slavery in any territory, it is the sense of the National Council that Congress ought not to legislate upon the subject of slavery within the territory of the United States, and that any interference by Congress with slavery as it exists in the District of Columbia would be a violation of the spirit and intention of the compact by which the State of Maryland ceded the district to the United States, and a breach of the national faith.

13. The policy of the Government of the United States, in its relations with foreign governments, is to exact justice from the strongest and do justice to the weakest, restraining by all the power of the Government all its citizens from interfering with the internal concerns of nations with whom we are at peace.

14. This National Council declares that all the principles of the order shall be henceforth everywhere openly avowed, and that each member shall be at liberty to make known the existence of the order, and the fact that he himself is a member, and it recommends that there be no concealment of the places of meeting of subordinate councils.

APPENDIX B.

NATIONAL PLATFORM, 1856.

An humble acknowledgment to the Supreme Being for his protecting care vouchsafed to our fathers in their successful Revolutionary struggle, and hitherto manifested to us, their descendants, in the preservation of the liberties, the independence and the union of these States.

2. The perpetuation of the Federal Union, as the palladium of our civil and religious liberties, and the only sure bulwark of American independence.

3. Americans must rule America, and to this end, native-born citizens should be selected for all State and municipal offices, or government employment, in preference to all others; nevertheless,

4. Persons born of American parents residing temporarily abroad should be entitled to all the rights of native-born citizens; but

5. No person should be selected for political station (whether of native or foreign birth) who recognizes any allegiance or obligation of any description to any foreign prince, potentate or power, or who refuses to recognize the Federal and State Constitutions (each within its sphere) as paramount to all other laws as issues of political action.

6. The unqualified recognition and maintenance of the reserved rights of the several States, and the cultivation of harmony and fraternal good-will between the citizens of the several States, and to this end, non-interference by Congress with questions appertaining solely to the individual States, and non-intervention by each State with the affairs of any other State.

7. The recognition of the right of the native-born and naturalized citizens of the United States, permanently residing in any territory thereof, to frame their Constitution and laws, and to regulate their domestic and social affairs in their own mode, subject only to the provisions of the Federal Constitution, with the privilege of admission into the Union whenever they have the requisite population for one representative in Congress. Provided always, that none but those who are citizens of the United States, under the Constitution and laws thereof, and who have a fixed residence in any such territory, ought to participate in the formation of the Constitution or in the enactment of laws for said territory or States.

8. An enforcement of the principle that no State or territory ought to admit others than citizens of the United States to the right of suffrage, or of holding political office.

9. A change in the laws of naturalization, making a continued residence of twenty-one years, of all not hereinbefore provided for, an indispensable requisite for citizenship hereafter, and excluding all paupers, and persons convicted of crime, from landing upon our shores, but no interference with the vested rights of foreigners.

10. Opposition to any union between Church and State; no interference with religious faith or worship, and no test-oaths for office.

11. Free and thorough investigation into any and all alleged abuses of public functionaries, and a strict economy in public expenditures.

12. The maintenance and enforcement of all laws constitutionally enacted, until said laws shall be repealed, or shall be declared null and void by competent judicial authority.

13. Opposition to the reckless and unwise policy of the present administration in the general management of our National affairs, and more especially as shown in removing "Americans" by designation and conservative in principle from office, and placing foreigners and ultraists in their places; as shown in a truckling subserviency to the stronger and an insolent and cowardly bravado towards the weaker powers; as shown in reopening sectional agitation by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; as shown in granting to unnaturalized foreigners the right of suffrage in Kansas and Nebraska; as shown in its vacillating course on the Kansas and Nebraska question; as shown in the corruptions which pervade some of the departments of the Government; as shown in disgracing meritorious naval officers through prejudice or caprice; and as shown in the blundering mismanagement of our foreign relations.

14. Therefore, to remedy existing evils, and prevent the disastrous consequences otherwise resulting therefrom, we would build up the "American party" upon the principle hereinbefore stated.

15. That each State Council shall have authority to amend their several Constitutions, so as to abolish the several degrees, and institute a pledge of honor instead of other obligations for fellowship and admission into the party.

16. A free and open discussion of all the political principles embraced in our platform.